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ABSTRACT

Focusing on Hinduism, India, and Indian literature, this course guide offers help in organizing a course or units of instruction. The guide contains a historical outline of the evolution of Hinduism over a period of 3,000 years; a glossary listing terms in the guide and in Hindu literature; five courses of different time lengths (the literature of Hinduism, four paths to moksha, the evolution of Hindu religious thought, the parable, and women in Indian literature); three units (creation stories, Hindu stages of life, and Hindu self-discipline); additional suggestions; selected articles on related topics; a bibliography; a filmography; and lists of film strips, slides, and major sources of educational materials. (JM)

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A Resource Guide for Teachers of Hindu Literature

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CS 202 619

A Brief Note

I am deeply grateful to Miss Diane Martin for her able assistance and encouragement throughout the preparation of the Resource Guide.

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PREFACE

In this guide we have attempted to offer you some help in organizing a course or units about Hinduism, India, and Indian literature.

The Historical Survey is a brief capsule of the evolution of Hinduism over a period of 3000 years. After reading it you might want to turn to Basham's The Wonder That Was India for a more detailed explanation of what can only be suggested in this brief survey.

The Glossary is a list of terms you will encounter when reading this guide and Hindu Literature. It will serve you as a convenient dictionary of useful terms. A casual reading through the glossary will prove both informative and enjoyable. It will lead you to important questions and send you off on explorations of understanding.

The courses and units of instruction suggest a number of ways of organizing your personal study of Hinduism and formulating instructional programs for your students. Both courses and units include objectives, activities, and assigned readings from the Hindu Literature. You might find these helpful until you are knowledgeable and confident enough to strike out on your own.

Beginnings are both awkward and difficult and the right kind of help can ease the way. With this thought in mind, we have included a few articles from the many that we found particularly informative. You will find our selections idiosyncratic--a personal sharing of some good things found. We are certain you will make your own discoveries once you begin to look beyond the resources offered here.

The bibliography, filmography and the list of filmstrip and slide programs are not definitive, but selective. What is offered in these sections should serve as a sound basis for your study of Hinduism and Hindu literature. The annotations were written to tell you what the selection is about and how it might help both you and your students. We hope they serve these purposes clearly and accurately.

Last of all, we have listed major sources of educational materials and information. When you have a need that this guide does not answer, turn to these sources for help.

Although this guide was written for teachers who plan to offer their students courses or units about Hinduism, based on the Hindu Literature, teachers of English and world cultures who have no intention of using the text should find this guide a useful resource. We believe it will be helpful to those embarking on a solitary journey into the mysteries and magnificance of Hinduism.

John L. Meehan

INTRODUCTORY HISTORICAL SURVEY
OF THE INDIAN RELIGIOUS TRADITION
2700 B.C. - 700 A.D.

I. Meaning of the term "Hinduism"

A. "Hindu" is a Persian word used by the Greeks from the fourth century B.C. to refer to the people and religious beliefs of the region around the Indus River. The term "Hindu" was extended by Europeans to cover the entire South Asian sub-continent despite the great diversity of the groups within the area. This conventional usage is now generally accepted to refer to both the Indianssthemselves and their religious beliefs.

B. "Hindu" does not, however, refer to all peoples and religions that appear in Indian culture. For example, Christians, Muslims, and Zoroastrians are not included. These are foreign in origin and unassimilated to the native tradition.

C. Certain religious traditions of native Indian origin are also excluded even though they share many fundamental beliefs with Hindus, e.g., Buddhism and Jainism. For a variety of reasons, these Indian traditions remained separate from the dominant Hindu tradition.

D. In general, a religious tradition and its people is included within the Hindu fold if it satisfies the following characteristics:

1. Its beliefs, practices, and social organization are based upon the fundamental Hindu scriptures called the Vedas.

2. Its social groups and their norms of behavior have a definite status within what Hindus regard as the just and natural order of society. This social order is popularly known as the caste system. Ideally, this system is believed to be an expression of eternal truth (Sanatana Dharma). Better than any alternate system it preserves the diverse rights, privileges, and responsibilities of the members of the society, as well as supporting the various functions that must be performed for the good of the society.

3. Generally, but not without exception, a fund of common beliefs is shared by Hindu groups. Among others, these include belief in transmigration and in the fundamentally moral character of the universe.

E. Practices, beliefs, organizational patterns, and ethnic origin vary tremendously within Hinduism.

F. The living historical development of Hinduism through the centuries possesses a continuity, versatility, adaptability, and power of assimilation that is much more impressive than the mere enumeration of common characteristics. It is the genius of the Hindu religious tradition that it can preserve great variety within its actually loose, but ideally harmonious, family.

II. The Pre-Historic Period (2700-1500 B.C.)

A. The Indus Valley Civilization developed to a cultural level parallel to that of the contemporary civilizations of the Nile and Tigris-Euphrates Valleys.

B. Religious beliefs perhaps inherited from this culture by later Hinduism include worship of the mother goddess, agricultural fertility rites, and possibly a tradition of asceticism or world-renunciation.

C. No literature from this period has been deciphered. All evidence is indirect and archaeological.

III. The Vedic Period and the Development of Brahmanism (1500-600 B.C.)

A. The successive waves of invasion by the Aryans ("noble ones") into northwest India and their gradual spread through several centuries over north India as the dominant ruling class. A separate but related group of Aryans migrated into Iran.

B. The formation of the Vedas

The first division of the Vedas is a collection of hymns (samhitas) used by priest families in conjunction with the sacrificial ritual. These were preserved orally for many centuries before being written down in an old form of Sanskrit. Some of the hymns date from a period before the entry of the Aryans into India.

C. The Religion of the Vedic Hymns (Samhitas)

1. Early Period

The earlier stratum of Vedic hymns exhibits belief in a large number of gods whose relationship to one another is not clearly conceptualized, but whose powers are recognized in various aspects of human life, especially in the realm of physical nature. Many of these gods are understood to be more or less autonomous, sometimes cooperating with each other and at times conflicting. There is also a belief in some kind of cosmic order reflected in the regularity of succession of day and night and of the seasons in their proper order

as well as a partial harmony that pervades the relationships among men, among the gods, and between men and the gods. The difference in nature between men and the gods is not sharply drawn. The gods are more powerful and live longer than men, yet men have a limited legitimacy and power of their own. Accordingly, many of the tasks that men wish to accomplish, they can do on their own power. Other tasks require the special knowledge of the universe that makes the sacrificial ritual effective. Still other tasks require the help and cooperation of various gods for their accomplishment.

The earlier Vedic hymns exhibit a qualified polytheism, a strong ritualistic tradition, and an optimistic cooperation between men and the gods in taking over control of north India from its native inhabitants.

2. Later Period

In the latest stratum new developments in several directions are in evidence:

a. The ritual system becomes increasingly important and is regarded as powerful enough to coerce the gods.

b. Tendencies develop toward seeking the one god behind the many gods.

c. Speculation begins about "That One," an impersonal notion, from which the created world derived and of which it is still a part.

d. There is increasing concern with discovering correlations and/or fundamental identities among forces and characteristics in man's nature, the physical terrestial world, astronomical phenomena, and the details of the sacrificial system.

D. Commentaries on the Hymns of the Vedas

1. Commentaries on the hymns were developed to meet the needs of an increasingly powerful priesthood and to insure the precisely exact performance of the sacrfficial ritual.

2. While the Aranyakas and Brahmanas are primarily manuals for the instruction of student priests, they are also concerned with understanding the principles of the sacrificial ritual as well as its details. In the process of interpreting these principles the import of the hymns is developed far beyond their apparent original import.

a. The gods (devata), while still believed to exist, become increasingly less important.

b. The ritual becomes all important as a magically effective "science" of reality.

c. The words of the ritual become most important; consequently the priest (Brahmana) who knows the sacred words (Brahma) becomes very powerful.

d. New and elaborate theories of the creation of the world are developed and, consequently, new interpretations of man and his place in the world.

3. The Upanishads continue to develop the symbolic meaning of the ritual, its relationships to the process by which the world was created, and the spiritualization and internalization of the ritual. The best known of the conceptions from the Upanishads is the belief that the essence of the individual self (ātman) is of the same nature, closely related to, or identical with the essence of the universe at large (Brahman). This conception is, at least in part, a development of earlier speculation on the ritual and the search for correlations among man, nature, and spirit. The way in which this correlation between man as microcosm and the universe as macrocosm is conceived by the Upanishads varies considerably. The plurality of religious and philosophical views within the Upanishads has provided an authoritative basis for many of the diverse religious traditions of later Hinduism.

IV. Brahmanical Synthesis and the Development of Puranic Religion (ca. 500 B.C. - 500 A.D.)

A. The Dharma Shastras or Books of Sacred Law (500 B.C. - 500 A.D.)

It is in the Dharma Shastras and related writings that characteristic features of Hinduism first appear in developed form. The movement these writing reflect constituted an attempt to consolidate, revive, and extend the older Brahmanism of the ritual tradition into a pattern for the whole society.

1. Dharma is the moral and physical law that sustains the universe, the society, and individuals. As applied to social life, it is the regulations for the different social classes that govern the truly just society. For the individual it is his duty and moral virtue. Derived from the Vedic conception of the moral order of the universe and believed to have been revealed to ancient seers, the details of this just order are recorded in a vast literature, the most famous of which is the Manu Smriti or Laws of Manu.

2. The doctrines of Samsara (transmigration) and karma (the law of moral retribution) are developed in great detail and become standard principles of Hinduism.

3. The ideal four classes (varnas) of the society are given a sacred foundation and directly related to karma and samsara as well as to the privileges and responsibilities of each class for the society as a whole. The four classes are divided into numberless castes (jati) with very complex variations in their regulations and relationships to each other.

4. In a sense, the whole of Hindu society with its myriad sub-divisions becomes the ecclesiastical organizations of Hinduism, based, it is believed, on eternal law (sanatana Dharma).

B. Renunciation

While practiced to some extent by most Hindus but exclusively by only a small minority, the tradition of world renunciation represented, e.g., in the Yoga tradition, has been tremendously influential on the Hindu discipline. Yoga offers a method by which the individual is freed from all karma and the round of rebirth. The development of renunciation as a means of salvation from a world of misery was probably stimulated from native Indian traditions independent of the Vedic tradition. But it is also a development of experiments in internalizing the Vedic sacrifice and of the tradition of correlations between man the microcosm and the macrocosmic universe.

C. Devotion (Bhakti)

The origin of traditions of devotion to personal gods is historically obscure. Apparently, the Bhakti tradition developed originally from non-Brahmanical and non-Vedic sources. Over a period of centuries, devotional worship of various gods was assimilated to the Hindu tradition and gradually became Hinduism's most salient feature. Correspondingly, worship changed from the Ritual sacrifice (yajna) of the Vedic period to praise and care for (puja) one's chosen deity in the home, the temple, or the festival.

The major gods of the Bhakti tradition are in one sense monotheistic gods. Shiva or Vishnu is regarded as the sole all-powerful god, lord Ishvara of the world process, and able to save from karma and rebirth. But, in another sense Bhakti is polytheistic. Not only is the existence of other gods (devata) recognized, but God Himself is believed to appear in a variety of lesser manifestations, incarnations (avatars), or powers (shakti), each of which is also worthy of worship.

D. The Synthesizing Power of Hinduism

1. Hinduism has displayed enormous power of adjustment to new movements of religious thought, practice, and devotion; and the ability to absorb new ethnic and cultural groups originally unrelated to the Brahmanism of north India.

2. The Mahabharata epic (itihasa) perhaps more than any other body of literature in the Hindu tradition displays the great variety of belief and practice retained side by side in the culture. The story of an ancient war for the control of north India was composed over several centuries (fourth century B.C. - fourth century A.D.). New movements are represented by simply adding them to the literature in the form of new episodes and discourses in the original story.

3. The Mahbharata as a whole evidences some consciousness of the conflict of traditions within its pages and some attempt to reconcile the variant traditions. An ingenious harmonization of the tradition is displayed in the famous Bhagavadgita (100 B.C. - 100 A.D.) which is contained within the Mahabharata. The Bhagavadgita more than any other document enunciates the kind of solution characteristic of Hinduism for the problem of social and religious pluralism. Life in the various social classes and castes according to the sacred law is strongly affirmed in the Gita as each man's duty, but the way in which a man is to perform his duty is transformed into a kind of other-worldliness in the midst of worldly work. Renunciation and devotion to God are not opposed to the fulfillment of social obligations or religious rituals. Instead, they give the key to the extension of sacrifice to include each man's fulfillment of his duty as a gift to God or as a means of renouncing the world.

The Gita also regards devotion to the highest personal god and to the impersonal absolute reality of the Upanishads as equally valid possibilities for worship and salvation.

4. Hinduism absorbs variations in the religious tradition, provided they are not impossible to assimilate or are destructive of the social structure. Each important variant is given a niche in the socio-religious fabric where it is validated, protected, and isolated from conflict with potentially opposing religious movements. These myriad variations are theoretically, and to a certain degree practically, related to each other in the complex harmony of diversity called Hinduism. Pluralism of belief, practice, and social organization is not only tolerated, but also sanctioned as the just order of society. Ultimately, this diversity is believed to be the manifestation of the unity of the spirit in the power and structure of the cosmos.

GLOSSARY

ADVAITA VEDANTA Non-dualist philosophy; expounded by Shankara; based on the Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita and Brahma Sutra.

AHIMSA Non-injury. The desire and endeavor to live and act at all times in such a way as to cause benefit and certainly not injury to others.

ANANDA Perfect happiness or bliss; one of the three attributes of Brahmin or Sat-Chit-Ananda.

ARJUNA Warrior in the Bhagavad-Gita.

ARTHA One of the four aims of life. To acquire wealth, power, prestige and possessions.

ASHRAMA A hermitage or dwelling-place of persons devoted to the religious life. Also any one of the stages or phases of a lifetime.

ATMAN The true Self in contrast with the false self of individuality and personality which each man commonly thinks himself to be. It is the individual part of the universal soul.

AVATAR an incarnation of God.

BHAKTI One of the four paths to God in which the person is devoted to a personal duty.

BHAKTI-YOGA Discipline of devotion leading to liberation.

BRAHMA The Creator God, the first of the three personifications of the Hindu triad (Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva).

BRAHMACARYA avoidance of sexual action and excitement. Also the first stage of life in which a young man (BRAHMACARYIN) studies the sacred texts and practices chaste conduct.

BRAHMAN the universal soul, the Ultimate Reality, non-dual or absolute divine reality, distinguished from the Divine in its personal aspect.

BRAHMIN a man of the highest caste, a teacher, a priest.

DHARMA Eternal moral order of the universe as well as each individual's part of that law, therefore a person's duty. One of the aims of life.

DHYANA Discipline of meditation or contemplation.

GRIHASTHA the second stage of life - that of the householder (GRIHASTHIN).

GUNA Quality, the three primary qualities that form the nature of the created world: sattva (knowledge, illumination); rajas (action, energy); tamas (darkness, lethargy).

GURU Teacher, spiritual guide, one who takes disciples for religious instruction.

HATHA YOGA Physical yoga; postures and rhy.

ISHVARA The absolute in its personal aspect; God or Brahman from the perspective of maya.

JNANA Knowledge, especially spiritual knowledge, one of the five principal yogas or disciplines for achieving union with the Absolute.

KALI (Durga) wife of Shiva. One of the many forms of Shakti, the Divine Mother or Great Goddess of Hinduism.

KALPA an eon, a vast period of time that encompasses the creation and dissolution of a universe.

KAMA one of the four aims of life. To experience pleasure and sensual enjoyments.

KARMA action; the law of karma is the result of action and reaction in a series of rebirths.

KRISHNA One of the most popular of the Hindu pantheon, the eighth incarnation of Vishnu.

KSHATRIYA member of the military or reigning order, which constitutes the second caste in Hindu society.

LAKSHMI Goddess of prosperity.

LILA Sport, existence regarded as play of the Divine.

LINGAM a stylized phallic symbol connoting maleness vitality, creative power and an emblem of Shiva.

MANTRA a word, verse or syllable which embodies in sound some specific deity or supernatural power.

MAYA literally illusion. The word is used in connection with the doctrine that external objects exist only in the imagination of the beholder.

MOKSHA freedom in general, but especially freedom of the soul from rebirth.

OM The mystic syllable in Vedic literature taken as the basis of all sound.

PURUSHARTHAS Four ends of life: artha, Karma, dharma, and moksha.

RAJA-YOGA Discipline of quieting the mind.

RISHI Sage, singer of the Vedas.

SADHANA Spiritual or yogic practice and self-realization.

SAMADHI In yoga, the union of the individual mind with the Supreme Consciousness.

SAMSARA the course of human existence through incarnation after incarnation.

SAMSKARA the innate tendencies of a person, and what in terms of karma is carried from one life to the next.

SANNYASA a Hindu who has renounced the world; a general term for a religious ascetic. The fourth stage of life.

SATYGRAHA literally truth-force, a word coined by Gandhi meaning the power of truth, not by the infliction of suffering on the opponent but upon oneself.

SHAKTI Power, energy, world-mother, usually visualized as a goddess, consort, or feminine aspect of a deity.

SHIVA Third person of the Hindu triad, the creator/destroyer. The great ascetic who works miracles by virtue of penance and meditation.

SUDRA the lowest of the four castes that of a peasant or laborer.

SUTRA a literary form, the equivalent of paragraph headings requiring further explanation. Also the sacred thread worn by members of the three upper castes.

TANTRA Mystical discipline of physical energy. A body of esoteric Hindu religious literature said to have been revealed by the Shiva for man's guidance in the present age.

TAPAS the purifying practice of austerities.

VAISYA next to the lowest caste, that of merchant or farmer

VANAPRASTHA the third stage of life that of hermit (VANAPRASTHIN) seeking spiritual enlightenment in the forest.

VARNA literally color, used to denote caste.

VEDANTA Philosophical systems based on the Vedas.

VISHNU Second person of the Hindu triad (with Brahma and Shiva), his avators include Rama and Krishna.

YOGA the steps necessary for union of mind, body and spirit. The four main yogas are karma-yoga (performing deeds and services), jnana-yoga (seeking divine knowledge), bhakti-yoga (worshipping God), and raja-yoga (practicing psychological exercises).

THE LITERATURE OF HINDUISM

(semester)

Since 1974, Literature of Hinduism has been offered in an English elective program at McCaskey High School, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Any student from grades ten through twelve may elect it. There are no pre-requisites. It is taught for a full semester (90 days). It is a companion course to Religious Literature of the West, a semester course which has been offered every year since 1968 at McCaskey High School.

The course is based on selections from the sacred writings of Hinduism from the Vedas to the writings of Gandhi. The course offers a study of Hindu myths, legends, rituals and social practices based on a substratum of philosophical and religious thought. The course:

(1) guides the student to discover the universal human condition and the ways the Hindu mind has grappled with it,

(2) assists the student in exploring the seeming chaos of innumerable strands of Hindu thought and literature, and

(3) provides an atmosphere where open inquiry reduces the pressure to supply answers in the Western scientific method.

COURSE OUTLINE

Unit I	Hindu Folk Tales and Parables
Unit II	Religious Man and Patterns in Religious Literature
Unit III	Myths of Man and the Cosmos in Hindu Literature
Unit IV	The Place of Gods and Avatars in Popular Hinduism
Unit V	Karma as the Triumph of Justice in Archetypal Heroes
Unit VI	Discipline and Yoga: Steps to Pure Consciousness
Unit VII	Religious Ritual in Everyday Indian Life
Unit VIII	Brahman-Atman: The Realization of the True Self
Unit IX	The Bhagavad-Gita: Scripture of Universal Scope
Unit X	Aphorisms of the Vedanta System
Unit XI	Ramakrishna: Many Rivers Reaching theeOne Sea
Unit XII	Indian Poetry: Tagore, Kabir, Bartrihari
Unit XIII	Gandhi and Modern Hinduism

UNIT I: Hindu Folk Tales and Parables 3 days

A. Objectives

1. To discover Hinduism's close observation of, and affinity with nature

2. To apply analogies between the lessons of nature and the problems of man

3. To identify fables, parables and narratives as literary forms popular with the Hindu masses

B. Content

1. Read the Panchatantra in small groups

2. Make a list of the human predicaments in the stories

3. Assign the following from Ramakrishna's Parables: "How to Live in the World" (Tortoise); "Protection from Evil-Minded People" (Snake); "Speaking of God" (Elephant); "Knowing About God" (Tree animal)

C. Materials

1. Poem: "The Blind Man and the Elephant"

2. An optical illusion

D. Assignments

1. Compile during discussion a list of predicaments of man

2. Write a parable or folk tale resolving one human predicament

E. Evaluation: Assignment 2

UNIT II. Religious Man and Patterns in Religious Literature 15 days

A. Objectives

1. To confront the mind of religious man
2. To define myth, motif and archetype as patterns in sacred literature
3. To find mythic meanings in Hindu dharma, karma, varuna and ashrama, samsara
4. To relate the Hindu concept of the cosmic order (macrocosm) with the practice of caste and the stages of life (microcosm)
5. To identify didactic material

B. Content

1. Discuss the nature of religious man, his needs and his solutions
2. Expand samsara as a central myth in Hinduism; read Mahabharata "Man in the Well"
3. Identify dharma, karma, varuna and ashrama in Laws of Man
4. Expand the description of ashrama and the stages of life of archetypal Hindu man (Brahmin) in Bartrihari, "Man in the World of Villains and Kings;" "Passionate Encounters" "Refuge in the Forest"
5. Discuss didactic material and compare with Biblical didacticisms
6. Assign a cast of characters and a narrator to read aloud "Savitri," from the Mahabharata
7. Compare archetypal Hindu woman, Savitri, with archetype of Western woman
8. Discuss order in the cosmos (macrocosm) and Hindu order in society (microcosm)

C. Materials

1. Reference Books
   a. Smith: Religions of Man, preface
   b. Noss: Man's Religions, page 2, pages 33 - 77
2. Visual: Man and His Gods
3. Fiction
   a. Markandaya: Nectar in a Sieve
   b. Markandaya: The Village Had No Walls

D. Assignments

1. Begin a glossary of Hindu terms
2. Write extemporaneously on the topic, "What I Know About Hinduism and India"
3. Learn Sanskrit and definitions: samsara, dharma, karma, varuna, ashrama
4. Paper on caste
5. Visual of "Man in the Well" or visual or parable of a Western counterpart

E. Evaluations: Assignments 3, 4 and 5

UNIT III: Myths of Man and the Cosmos in Hindu Literature 4 days

A. Objectives

1. To explore the Hindu mind regarding the place of man in creation and time

2. To view primal man as an archetypal figure linking microcosmic ritual to macrocosmic universe

3. To identify hymns in Hindu literature

4. To understand "Om" as a motif of a cosmic sound syllable

B. Content

1. Read aloud Puranas, "The Parade of Ants" and "Kali Age"

2. Discuss man's place in time and creation

3. Organize small groups to discuss and visualize primal man as archetype and microcosm in Vedas, "Purusha Sukta"

4. Assign outside readings of Vedas, "Prajapati;" Laws of Manu, "Creation;" and Puranas, "Creation"

5. Listen to chants while reading Upanishads, "OM"

C. Materials

1. Book: Noss. Man's Religions, pages 87 - 104

2. Record: Sheikh Record. Hindu Chants

D. Assignments

1. An original creation hymn employing archetypal man or motif of primal sound

2. Participation in mantra and OM

E. Evaluation: Assignment 1

UNIT IV: The Place of Gods and Avatars in Popular Hinduism 15 days

A. Objective

1. To explain the myths of the major triad of gods: Brahma (creation, now complete); Vishnu (preservation and continuing incarnation - avatars); Shiva (destruction and life energy)
2. To understand the major triad as Hindu explanations of the nature of the phenomenal world and the transcendent
3. To follow the development of minor gods and their place in popular Hinduism
4. To observe the "pair of opposites" and "disguise of the gods" as motifs

B. Content

1. Contrast the abstract principle of "That One" in Vedas: "Song of Creation" with the characteristics of the major triad
2. Visualize the triad, their consorts and vehicles, as myths
3. Discuss the avatars of Vishnu
4. Enjoy Krishna as divine lover in Gita Govinda
5. Develop the "pair of opposites" as motif in the Shakti-Shiva principle in The Flood of Beauty and as activation of Prakriti (matter)
6. Assign Vedas: Varuna, Indra, Usas, Prajayana
7. Read Puranas, "The Perfect Wife - Sati." Discuss "disguise of the gods" as motif and Sati as archtypal Hindu woman

C. Materials

1. Books
   a. Hopkins. The Hindu Religious Tradition, pages 17 - 35
   b. Johnson. God and Gods in Hinduism, entire book, pages 1-86
2. Visual: Center for the Humanities: East Meets West, A Contrast

D. Assignments

1. Read the Vedas and references about Hindu gods
2. Write possible explanation in essay form for the development of one god, his consort and vehicle. Use specific Hindu graphics
3. Make visuals of Shiva, Vishnu and Krishna (mobiles, two-dimensional graphics, three-dimensional figures, paintings, sketches, tracings, etc.) An avatar may be chosen with special permission
4. Invent a god or goddess, or choose one aspect of God, and describe the form and attributes to meet the needs of contemporary man

E. Evaluation: 2, 3 and 4

UNIT V: Karma as the Triumph of Justice in Archetypal Figures 5 days

A. Objectives

1. To discover narrative and legend as literary forms for keeping tradition alive
2. To understand the Hindu idea that natural forces are partners in effecting universal justice
3. To study archetypal hero and heroine, Rama and Sita
4. To discover parallel examples from Western archetypes

B. Content

1. Read Ramyana as legend and narrative and illustrate the characteristics of these forms in this piece of literature
2. List universally heroic qualities in Rama, Sita, Laksman and the demonic qualities in Ravena. List the qualities peculiar to Hindu culture
3. Analyze the motifs of mountains, sea, monkeys, deer, birds.
4. Summarize the conclusion of the story and relate it to Hindu concepts of karma, dharma and justice
5. Introduce karma-yoga, the way of works which Ram portrays, and show the Hindu's reverence for Ram, as example, Gandhi

C. Assignments

1. Read the Ramayana in independent study
2. Write a narrative, or paint a scroll, expanding to the proportions of a legend some exemplary hero or heroine, real or imaginary, in which justice is effected and in which natural forces play a positive role
3. Write on the board original statements (1-10 words) which tell the moral of the story
4. Make visuals of Hindu iconography showing natural life, birds, animals. Example: Hanuman, the monkey rescuer in Ramyana

D. Evaluation: 2 or 4

UNIT VI: Discipline and Yoga: Steps to Pure Consciousness 5 days

A. Objectives

1. To understand yoga as systematic control for union of the body, mind and spirit
2. To define the four yogas (paths to God)
3. To define the three gunas as elements of Prakriti (material world)
4. To understand the goal of raja yoga: a state of super-consciousness in which the self (purusha) is extricated from matter (Prakriti)

B. Contents

1. Read Upanishads "Yoga;" Patanjali's Yoga Sutras and Ramakrishna "True Knowledge"
2. Explain the limits of sutra and the place of a guru
3. Define Prakriti and samadi
4. Describe and illustrate the four yogas
5. Research modern adaptations of yoga, such as meditation, fasting, diet control, devotional practices, return to nature, mantras

C. Materials

1. Books
   a. Hopkins. The Hindu Religious Tradition, pages 64-69
   b. Smith. Religions of Man, pages 32-61
2. Visuals: Inter-Culture Associates. Hinduism, filmstrip

D. Assignments

1. Write a paper on the four yogas
2. Research modern practices which are adaptations of yoga
3. Trace references to meditation and worship (bhaki yoga) in Biblical literature
4. Add to the glossary all Sanskrit terms used to date

E. Evaluations

1. Assignment 1, 2 or 3
2. Test on Sanskrit terms: ashrama, avatar, brahmacarya, Brahma, Brahmin, bhakti, dharma, grihastha, gunas, guru, karma, kshatriya, mantra, moksha, sannyasa, samsara, sudra, sutra, vaisya, vanaprastha, varna, yoga. Also purusha, prakriti, and under gunas include tamas, rajas, sattwas, and under yogas include karma-yoga, jnana-yoga, bhakti-yoga and raja-yoga.

UNIT VII: Religious Ritual in Everyday Indian Life 10 days

A. Objectives

1. To define and give examples for the four aims of life
2. To understand the role of poets, saints and singers in Indian culture
3. To visualize Indian pilgrimage, festivals, pujas, and ascetic practices
4. To discern motifs in the sacred thread ceremony, marriage ceremony, reverence for the cow, the Ganges, cremation

B. Contents

1. Read Kama Sutra as instruction for one aim in life: kama
2. Study the Laws of Manu for description of dharma and moksha
3. Recite as a group the Hymns of the Tamil Saints and Ode in Praise of Shiva's Greatness
4. Discuss the sacred thread ceremony of the "twice born" as motif for "crossing the threshold."
5. Explain reverence for the cow as symbol in Hindu tradition; also cremation and pilgrimage, especially to the Ganges
6. Describe a marriage ceremony
7. Introduce a later concept: that sacrifice to the gods is not required of man but devotion to god is supreme; that performance of one's duty without thought to reward is the best sacrifice

C. Materials

1. Artifacts, textiles, reproductions, Indian food, incense, art, photographs, etc.
2. Encyclopedia
3. Noss. Man's Religions, pages 200-216

D. Assignments

1. Set up a household puja and identify the symbolisms
2. Write or visualize one motif in Hindu religious ritual
3. Describe the four aims of life in a paper, using illustrations from everyday Indian life
4. Prepare an Indian meal

E. Evaluations

1. Assignment 1 or 4
2. Assignment 2 or 3

UNIT VIII: Brahman-Atman: The Realization of the True Self 5 days

A. Objectives

1. To understand the central idea in the Upanishads: "That Art Thou"
2. To raise the question, "What is the true self? What is Brahman?"
3. To study specific illustrations and analogies in the Upanishadic tradition which instruct the reader in Brahman -Atman

B. Content

1. Study the Upanishadic method of instruction by a guru
2. Read the Upanishads for the central idea
3. Study analogies for the Self and Brahman-Atman: salt water, chariot, two birds, fig seeds, drum, lute, caterpillar
4. Discuss the concept of maya
5. Discuss the idea, "I am good! I am an eater of food! I who am food eat the eater of food!"

C. Materials

1. Books
   a. Hopkins. The Hindu Religious Tradition, pages 36-49
   b. Noss. Man's Religions, pages 96-103
2. Poems
   a. Emerson. "Brahman"
   b. Whitman, "Song of Myself"

D. Assignments

1. Write an original analogy of the Upanishadic idea, "That Art Thou"
2. Write a dialogue using the Upanishadic method of instruction by which a student arrives at an answer to a simple question on the state and being of man

E. Evaluations: 1 and 2

UNIT IX: The Bhagavad-Gita: Scripture of Universal Scope 10 days

A. Objectives

1. To understand the Bhagavad-Gita as a synthesis of Hindu thought
2. To understand the setting, the plot and the central problem of the story and its resolution
3. To find specific answers of Lord Krishna to Arjuna's questions on the meaning of life
4. To review dharma, karma, the four yogas

B. Content

1. Tell the background of the battlefield scene where Arjuna stands in the forefront of the forces facing his kinsmen
2. Raise the fundamental question in Arjuna's mind, "Would it be better to be killed than to kill?"
3. Study the following: *
   - 2.19 The Self when free of all changes
   - 2.47 Performance of action without regard to the fruits
   - 4.8 Incarnations of Vishnu coming to the aid of man in all ages
   - 5.10 Renunciation as the dedication of the fruits of one's actions to the Lord
   - 6.47 Bhakti as the highest form of yoga and the key to renunciation
   - 7.18 The mark of the true man of knowledge: disciple, single-minded devotion
   - 9.26 30 - 32, 34
     The true man of knowledge: not only he who practices yoga, but he, whoever he is, regardless of caste, who worships the Lord
   - 11.53 - 55
     Revelation of Krishna's cosmic form, and salvation through devotion to the Lord - both are accessible to all
   - 18.57 Offering all actions to the Lord is applicable to the dharma of all classes and all stages of life

C. Assignments

1. Write an essay showing Arjuna's gradual enlightenment. By direct quotations and explanations, show his understanding of devotion.
2. List images in the beatific visic from the natural world
3. Expand performance of one's own dharma in line 3.35

D. Materials. Book: Hopkins. The Hindu Religious Tradition, pages 90-95

E. Evaluations: 1 and 3

*From Hopkins, The Hindu Religious Tradition

UNIT X: Aphorisms of the Vedanta System 3 days

A. Objectives

1. To define and illustrate aphorism as a form in sacred literature
2. To read Crest Jewel of Discrimination in dialogue between master and student
3. To understand Shankara's writings as central in Vedanta
4. To review maya and add Ishvara as the illusion-maker
5. To see that the purpose of Vedante is to transcend maya

B. Content

1. To illustrate aphorism as a pithy, oral form for common people
2. To define Ishvara and review maya. Other terms which may be added are: advaita (non-dualism) and jiva (individual ego)
3. Review the Upanishads as a source of Shankara's ideas
4. Read Crest Jewel of Discrimination as dialogue in classroom

C. Materials

1. Books
   a. Noss. Man's Religions, pages 198-200
   b. Rao. The Serpent and the Rope

D. Assignments

1. Write aphorisms which incorporate Reality and illusion, that is, "Things are not what they seem."
2. Make a diagram on the board showing the relationship between Brahman, jiva, maya, Ishvara, Brakriti, moksha

E. Evaluation. Asignment 1

UNIT XI: Ramakrishna: "Many rivers reaching the one sea" 5 days

A. Objectives

1. To review the purpose of parables
2. To trace the Ramakrishna Movement as an opening door between Eastern and Western religious thought and practices
3. To delineate those common traditions in belief and practice which form an underlying unity among all the world's great religions

B. Content

1. Read the Parables of Ramakrishna
2. Discuss Judaism's Shema, Ten Commandments and Passover; Christianity's Sermon on the Mount and the Lord's Prayer; Islam's Five Pillars of Wisdom and the Creed; Buddhism's Eight Fold Path

C. Materials

1. Books
   a. Hopkins. The Hindu Religious Tradition, pp. 136-7
   b. Noss. Man's Religions, pp. 217-224, and sections on the core of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism
   c. Smith. Religions of Man, sections on the core of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism
2. Films
   a. Mood of Zen. 14 min. 16 mm.
   b. The Reason Why. 14 min. 16 mm.

D. Assignments

1. A Western-style parable of practical advice on the general theme of "crossing the river of life."
2. A book report, preferably oral, on Siddhartha by Herman Hesse
3. A study of Ramakrishna Missions in America

E. Evaluation: One of the assignments

UNIT XII: Indian Poetry: Kabir, Bhartrihari, Kalidas, Tagore 5 days

A. Objectives

1. To compare the form of Kabir's works, written in vulgar Hindi and transmitted orally, with the lyric poetry of Kalidasa
2. To discover themes common to all four poets
3. To select word pictures in the poetry which convey the Indian tone and mood as related to self, nature, soul, god, spirit

B. Content

1. Compare the searchings of youth with the wisdom of old age in "The Cloud Messenger," by Kalidasa, and "Satakatrayam" by Bhartrihari
2. Compare a Western poem on romantic love with the attitude toward love and lovers by Kalidasa
3. Discuss the Upanishadic ideas of guru-disciple and Brahman-Atman in Kabir
4. Compare Tagore's ancient symbol of grass - and other aspects of nature - in his poem, "Gitanjali," with Walt Whitman in "Leaves of Grass" and other transcendentalists - Emerson and Thoreau

C. Materials

1. Books of American poetry and books of Indian poetry
2. Indian textiles, nature designs, arts and crafts

D. Assignments

1. Original graphics using Indian symbols, such as the peacock, monkey, lotus, cow, sitar, elephant, banyan tree, etc. Graphics might be reproductions of Indian folk art, two or three dimensional gods and goddesses, temple floor plan, national flag and symbols, musical instruments and records, textiles, Indian dress and coiffure, reproduction of Indian batik or an original batik.
2. Fashion show with saris

E. Evaluation: One graphic for classroom display

UNIT XIII: Gandhi and Modern Hinduism 7 days

A. Objectives

1. To review traditional ideas of Hinduism, specifically karma-yoga in the Gita, as the foundation for Gandhi's beliefs and practices
2. To understand the meaning of ahimsa, sayagraha, brachmacarya and fasting, and the practices of each as defined by Gandhi
3. To study the life and times of Gandhi as components of non-violent reform

B. Content

1. Read Gandhi's Autobiography
2. Trace the philosophy of Gandhi, the young student, as it developed into a political philosophy for Gandhi, the father of modern India as an independent nation
3. Compare Gandhi's non-violent methods with other twentieth century reform movements
4. Read biographical material on Gandhi by Western writers

C. Assignments

1. Make a two or three dimensional silhouette of the statue of Gandhi which is seen everywhere in India today
2. Write a paper on the four principles: ahimsa - non-violence; stayagraha - truth, a moral force; brachmacharya - celibacy and discipline; fasting - abstinence and restraint
3. Write a personal essay on the subject, "Wisdom In An Age of Science," from the point of view of the Eastern mind by which wisdom transcends and unites all of life, and myth, rite and contemplation, rather than scientific experiment, open the door "to a life in which the individual is not lost in the cosmos and in society but found in them." (Thomas Merton)
4. Compare the first statements which the student made about India and Hinduism with the statements which he now makes at the end of the course

D. Materials

1. Books
   a. Gandhi. Autobriography
   b. Hopkins. The Hindu Religious Tradition, pp. 137-138
   c. Noss. Man's Religions, pp. 217-224
   d. Smith. Religions of Man, pp. 45-46; 15-16
2. Film. Gandhi, Parts I and II, 16 mm., 40 minutes each

E. Evaluations: Assignments 4, 2, and 1 or 3.
Objective test on Glossary
Essay test on a major concept in Hinduism, 500 words

FOUR PATHS

(nine weeks)

Since 1967 some form of Hindu Religious Literature has been taught as an elective at State College Area High School. Originally the course was taught twice a week for a semester. It was later expanded to a five day a week semester course. Currently it is nine weeks. As part of the English elective program, it is offered to eleventh and twelfth graders. There are no prerequisites.

Goals:

Through the reading of selections from Hindu Religious Literature the student will:

1. Examine the religious concepts of another culture.
2. Contrast and compare these concepts with those of his own culture.
3. Gain an appreciation of his own culture.
4. Speculate about the origin, meaning, and purpose of existence.

General Objectives:

1. To discover the four paths to moksha.
2. To learn basic Hindu terms and concepts.
3. To understand the Hindu attitude toward existence.
4. To contrast and compare this attitude with the Western outlook.

Course:

Unit One: "The Man in the Well" (3-5 periods)

1. Objectives:

   A. To understand the dilemma of Hindu life as presented in "The Man in the Well".
   B. To contrast the Western and Hindu attitudes toward existence.
   C. To become familiar with basic Hindu religious terminology and concepts.
      1. Samsara
      2. Varna
      3. Moksha
   D. To understand and be able to write the parable form.

2. Content

   A. Read and discuss "The Man in the Well" as to meaning and literary form (parable).
   B. Write a Western parable paralleling "The Man In the Well".

C. Discuss similarities and differences of the student parables.
D. Formulate general statements about the Hindu attitude toward existence.
E. Prepare an individual course glossary of Hindu terms.

Unit Two: The Laws of Manu (5-7 periods)

1. Objectives:

A. To understand the nature of the structured Hindu society.
B. To understand the role of 'duty' in Hindu society.
C. To become familiar with basic Hindu religious terminology and concepts.
   1. Stages of Life - Brahmacarya
      Grihastha
      Vanaprastha
      Sannyasa
   2. Castes - Brahmin
      Kshatriya
      Vaisya
      Shuara
   3. Dharma
   4. Karma Yoga
D. To discover one Hindu solution to dilemma in "Man in the Well"-- the path of works or service.

2. Content:

A. Discuss possible solutions to dilemma in "Man in the Well".
B. Read selections from Laws of Manu and discuss.
C. Chart the stages/castes/duties in Hindu life.
D. Add to individual glossary of Hindu terms.

Unit Three: The Upanishads (7-10 periods)

1. Objectives:

A. To explore another Hindu solution to the dilemma— the path of knowledge.
B. To explore the meaning of soul, self and identity in Western and Hindu literature.
C. To become familiar with basic Hindu religious terminology and concepts:
   1. Atman
   2. Brahman
   3. Om
   4. Jnana Yoga

2. Content

A. Read and discuss from Upanishads:
   1. "Man's Condition"
   2. "Instructing the Student"
   3. "Atman"
   4. "Brahman"
   5. Western readings such as "Chambered Nautilus", "Devil and Daniel Webster", Stage Manager's speech in Act II of "Our Town".

B. Write a modern version of chariot metaphor in Upanishads.
C. Add to glossary of Hindu terms.

3. Evaluation

Written quiz on basic terms and on the Brahman/Atman relationship.

Unit Four: Yoga Sutras (3-6 periods)

1. Objectives:

A. To explore another Hindu solution to the dilemma - the path of psychological exercises.
B. To understand the sutra literary form.
C. To become familiar with basic Hindu religious terminology and concepts:
   1. mantra
   2. ekagrata
   3. dharana
   4. Raja yoga
D. To explore the physical, spiritual and mental disciplines involved in yoga.

2. Content:

A. Read and discuss Yoga Sutras.
B. Use of mnemonic devices as examples of sutra form.
C. Demonstrate yoga exercises.
D. Introduce and try meditation techniques.
E. Add to glossary of Hindu terms and concepts.

Unit Five: Bhagavad Gita (6-8 periods)

1. Objectives:

A. To explore a final solution to the dilemma, the path of devotion.
B. To explore further the Hindu meaning of duty.
C. To become familiar with basic Hindu terms and concepts:
   1. Bhakti yoga
   2. Karma
D. To understand non-attachment and self-discipline

2. Content:

A. Read and discuss The Bhagavad Gita.
B. Read and discuss Thomas Merton on the Gita, p. 352-3 Asian Journal.
C. Prepare situations that have a similar conflict of duty to Gita. How do men solve these?
D. Add to glossary.

3. Evaluation

A. Quiz on Arjuna's dilemma and at least one aspect of Krishna's solutions.

Unit Six: Gandhi (8-10 periods)

1. Objectives:

A. To explore the path of works or service in a modern context.
B. To understand the methods and philosophy of Gandhi.
C. To become familiar with basic Hindu terms and concepts:
   1. Satyagraha
   2. Brahmacarya
   3. Ahimsa
   4. Yajna
D. To cite contemporary uses of Gandhi's satyagraha.

2. Content

A. Read and discuss Gandhi section of the Hindu Anthology.
B. Enumerate techniques used by Gandhi.
C. Find Western examples of satyagraha by researching assigned topics such as Martin Luther King, Caesar Chavez.
D. Add to glossary

Unit Seven: Summary (2-3 periods)

1. Objectives

A. To summarize all four paths by citing their similarities and differences.
B. To give specific examples from the literature for each of the paths.
C. To give specific examples from contemporary Western literature and life for each of the paths.

2. Content

A. Review the four paths and make a chart of the similarities and differences.
B. Write a modern parable on man's existence based on the insights obtained in the course.
C. Compare the parable written at the beginning of course with present one.
D. If possible, select a parable which is, by agreement, typical or most suitable.
E. Find solutions to the parable's dilemma.
F. Discuss Western examples of the four paths such as service to community, young life.

3. Evaluation

A. Test on terms in glossary
B. Essay on one of the following topics:
   1. Choose one of the paths, explain it and tell what kind of individual would follow this path in Hindu society.
   2. Explain Brahman/Atman
   3. Hinduism has been called a religion of world denial and pessimism. Agree or disagree.

THE EVOLUTION OF HINDU RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

(six weeks)

History of Course

This is the Hindu component of a semester course on Eastern Religious Literature offered as a humanities elective at the State College Area Senior High School. The course is open to all juniors and seniors at one-half credit.

Goals

The student will understand the three major patterns of Hindu religious thought: polytheism, pantheistic monism and monotheism. As the student gains this understanding, he/she will acquire respect for the philosophical and spiritual searching of another era and of another culture. He/She will relate this understanding to his/her own cultural values. He/She will also begin to appreciate the vastness and complexity of Hinduism.

Unit One - Polytheism (7-10 days)

Objectives

1. To discover the exuberance and optimism of the early Indo-Aryans.
2. To understand the nature of Hindu polytheism.
3. To realize the importance of ritual and the priesthood and the importance of the influence of both in the development of a structured society.
4. To discover the first tendencies toward seeking the one god behind many gods.

Content

1. Show film, "India: Introduction to Its History". Discuss Aryan invasion of India.
2. Discuss evidences of polytheism and animism in Western culture.
3. Read and discuss hymns to various deities from Rig Veda:
   - Varuna p. 3
   - Indra p. 4
   - Soma p. 5
   - Vishnu p. 5
   - Usas p. 6
   - Parjanya p. 7
   - Savitar p. 8

   How are the gods spoken to? What adjectives are used?
   What are the gods asked for?
   In each case state what power or sphere of influence the god seems to have.
   What seems to be the relationship between the worshiper and the god?
   Does the worshiper seem to believe his/her requests will be answered?
4. Read and discuss "Purusha Sukta" p. 8.
   What are possible symbolic interpretations of the thousand heads, eyes, and feet of primal man?
   Describe the steps by which the universe is created.

Since the annual performance of the rituals accompanying this hymn was believed necessary to continue the universe, discuss what effect this belief would have upon the position of the priests in Hindu society.

5. Read and discuss "Song of Creation" p. 11.
   Contrast this hymn to "Purusha Sukta". What causes creation in this hymn?
   What does "it" refer to in line 3?
   Who or what is "this One" in stanza 4?
   Are the questions asked in stanzas 5 and 6 answered in stanza 7? If so, what are the answers? If not, why are they left unresolved?

Evaluation

Quiz on one or more of the discussion questions under numbers 3, 4, and 5.

Unit Two - Pantheistic Monism (5-7 days)

Objectives

1. To understand pantheistic monism.
2. To explore: (a) The continuing search for that One or the Ultimate Reality (Brahman).
   (b) The quest for the true Self (Atman).
   (c) The relationship between Atman and Brahman.

Content

1. Read and discuss the following selections as to the nature of the individual soul and the Universal Soul and the relationship of the two:
   a. Ramakrishna "Brahman" p. 267.
   b. Atman Upanishads p. 24-7.
   c. "Two birds" Upanishads p. 22
   d. Kabir "There is a strange tree..." p. 253
   e. Brahman Upanishads p. 29

Unit Three - Dharma and Society (5 days)

Objectives

1. To show the divine origin of Dharma, Varna, ashramas.
2. To show the development of a rigid, duty-bound society.

Content

1. Read and discuss "Man's Condition" The Upanishads p. 20.
   What is the dilemma of earthly existence?
   List the similes describing existence. What does each say about the Hindu attitude toward existence?
   How can the individual self counteract all this? List the ways.
2. Read "Creation" Laws of Manu p. 143-6.
   Contrast and compare with "Purusha Sukta" p. 8 and "Song of Creation" p. 11.
   Discuss Ages of the world and characteristics of each age, p. 145 (bottom)-6.

Discuss Dharma as eternal moral law of the universe and as an individual's duty.

3. Read "Origin of Caste" p. 146-7.
   "Duties of Caste" p. 147-9
   "Status of Women" p. 150
   "Stages of Life" p. 150-3
   List castes, stages of life and duties of each.
   Read Hinduism by R. C. Zaehner ppc 8, 12, 108-114, 147-9
   Read Religion of the Hindus by Kenneth Morgan pp. 16-17, 143-151, 181-184, 201-205
   Read The Hindu Rel. Tradition by T. J. Hopkins pp. 84-86

Evaluation

Paper on polytheism or pantheistic monism as revealed in the literature or on the relationship between the eternal Dharma and individual Dharma.

Unit Four - Monotheism (10 days)

Objectives

1. To understand the nature of Hindu monotheism, the Trimurti.
2. To discover the tradition of devotion to a personal god (bhakti).
3. To explore the synthesis of the Bhagavad Gita in reconciling the pluralistic strains of Hinduism.

Content

1. Explain the Trimurti:
   Shiva as creator, sustainer and destroyer.
   Vishnu as creator and preserver.
   Brahma as creator.
   Discuss the Christian Trinity - 3 aspects of God in one.
2. Read and discuss Ode in Praise of Shiva's Greatness p. 244-247.
   Paraphrase the first stanza.
   What is the attitude of the speaker toward Shiva?
   What powers are ascribed to Shiva?
3. Read and discuss Hymns of the Tamil Saints p. 194-196.
   What attributes of Shiva are extolled in these hymns?
   Discuss the attitude of the worshiper in each of the hymns.
4. Read and discuss Bhagavad Gita p. 66-91.
   Discuss Arjuna's dilemma.
   Discuss Krishna's answer.
   (1) It is not possible to kill since the death of the body is inevitable, but the true Self (atman) is eternal.
   (2) Arjuna is a warrior and his highest obligation is to his caste duty - to fight and kill..
   (3) If Arjuna dedicates the fruits of his actions to Krishna and performs his duty, free from desire, he will attain moksha.
   (4) All gods are merely forms of Krishna (Vishnu). Therefore all forms of worship of any deity lead to Krishna.
5. Discuss "The Gods of India" from A. Eustice Haydon's Biography of the Gods (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1967) in the light of what you have learned in this course.

Evaluation:

Paper on the reconciliation of the devotion of the Gita with the polytheism of the Vedas and pantheistic monism of the Upanishads.

PARABLE

Objectives:

1. To identify the elements of the parable form in Western and Hindu literature.
2. To interpret parables in Western and Hindu literature.
3. To write a parable.

Content:

1. Read and analyze using the following for each parable:

   What is the situation in the parable?
   What aspects of human existence or problems of daily life are being described?
   What lesson or moral is the parable teaching?
   Isolate the concrete images.
   List the abstractions (symbolic interpretations) beside each image.

2. Read and analyze "The Man in the Well" p. 34 of anthology.

Concrete	Abstract
Forest	Samsara - existence in the world
Beasts of prey	Diseases
Giantess	Old Age
etc.	

3. Read and analyze, using the above form, parables in Western literature such as: Parable of the Sower
   Parable of the Talents
   Parable of the Fig Tree

4. Read and analyze according to the form the parable of Ramakrishna, p. 263-77.

5. Discuss elements of the parable form.
   What common characteristics do each of the preceding parables have?
   Formulate a definition of the parable.

6. Write a parable.
   Decide first on message, lesson, or moral.
   Develop concrete images to match abstractions of the message.

7. Prepare a class anthology of parables.

WOMEN IN INDIAN LITERATURE

(three weeks)

The student will become acquainted with woman as she is described, as she acts, and as she is defined in ancient as well as modern Indian literature.

UNIT I Women as Heroines and Models of Conduct

Objectives: To become familiar with the heroines of Hindu Literature and the virtues they portrayed.

Read: "The Story of Savitri" from the Mahabharata
"Sati: The Perfect Wife" from the Puranas

Discussion Questions:

(Savitri)

1. Why does Asvapati urge Savitri to seek a man other than Satyanant for her husband?
2. Why does Savitri select Satyanant for her husband?
3. Describe Savitri's role in the household of her husband, specifically in relation to Dyumatsena, his wife, and Satyanant.
4. What is the vow that Savitri takes when her husband's death is imminent?
5. What does Savitri mean when she says to Yama, "Where my husband is taken . . ., there also I must go. This is the eternal law?"
6. Why does Yama grant Savitri five loons?
7. Why does Yama spare Satyanant's life?
8. What does this story suggest concerning a wife's relationship with her husband?

Discussion Questions:

(Sati)

1. Why does Sati's father oppose her marriage to Shiva?
2. Why does Sati go uninvited to her father's house?
3. What characteristic does the author suggest as being the common possession of all women?
4. There are two reasons (one human, one divine) why Sati goes to the festival at her father's house. What are they?

UNIT I (continued)

Further Study:

1. Read Shakuntala by Kalidasa. Compare to Savitri and Sati. Does she reflect the vision of women as described in the Bhartrihari and the Parables of Ramakrishna?
2. Read Section #4 from Narayan's Gods, Demons and Others. These stories are about four heroines (one of whom you are already familiar with) who according to Indian tradition overcame formidable obstacles in order to regain a lost husband.

UNIT II The Conduct of Women in Hindu Society

Objectives: To discover what rules governed the conduct of Women in Hindu's society.

Read: "The Status of Women" from the Laws of Manu

Discussion Questions:

1. What is man's responsibility to women?
2. Interpret the following phrase: "If a wife is radiant with beauty, the whole house is bright; but if she is destitute of beauty, all will appear dismal."
3. As described here, what are the duties of a woman to her father and husband? Compare these with what you have learned from "The Story of Savitri."

Further Study:

"Women in India" by Taya Zinkin, pages 131-140 in Fodor's India: 1975.
This essay describes the changing role of women in Modern India.

UNIT III Woman as Temptress

Objectives: To learn how some men view women in relation to the pursuit of the spiritual life.

Read: Stanzas 1-4 of "Passionate Encounters" from the Bhartrihari

"Women and Gold" from the Parables of Ramakrishna

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the dilemma presented in 'Passionate Encounters?"
2. What is the view of woman expressed in Ramakrishna's parable about "Women and Gold". What are women and gold metaphors for in this parable?
3. Contrast the role of women expressed in these readings with those exemplified in Savitri and Sati.

UNIT IV Shakti and Female Deities

Objectives: To understand the meaning of Shakti and the role of the feminine gods in the Hindu pantheon.

Read: "Flood of Beauty"

Discussion Questions:

1. What does the poet say about the importance of Shakti?
2. Does Shakti grant gifts and freedom from danger as other gods do? Explain your answer.
3. The physical description of Shakti is the formal, traditional description of a beautiful woman in classical Hindu literature. Compare the description of Shakti with that of Yaksha's wife in Stanza 19 of Cloud Messenger.
4. Compare the description of Shakti with what you consider to be the ideal description of the modern American woman.
5. From the poem select a descriptive phrase that you find peculiar or puzzling. Write an explanation for the poet's use of the phrase.

Further Study:

Read: "Shakti, or Durga Stories," pages 110-122 from The Dance of Shiva by Orom Ghosh.

"Shaktism," pages 211-213 from Man's Religions by John B. Noss

UNIT V The Hindu Women in Modern Indian Literature

Objectives: To explore the role of the Hindu women as depicted in modern Indian literature.

Read: 1. The Dharma of Women
Bezborao's "Bhadari" in Contemporary Indian Short Stories. In this three-page short story we have a modern expression of a wife's dharma. This will provoke much discussion.

Thakashi Sivasankara Pillai, Chemmeen. The happiness and success of the village rests on the women's shoulders. What happens when a woman violates her dharma? Is it virtue, or the appearance of virtue that matters?

Ruth Prawer Jhabvala. The Nature of Passion. Traditional ways meet modern man.

2. Marriage

Rabindranath Tagore, "The Stolen Treasure" and "The Conclusion" from The Runaway and other Stories. In the first story Tagore looks at the horoscope method for finding a bride. In "The Conclusion" he shows how love can grow after a marriage.

Santha Rama Rau, "Who Cares" from Tales of Modern India edited by K. Natwar-Singh. A marriage is arranged.

Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, Amrita. A modern urban girl expresses her vows on marriage.

Christine Weston, Indigo. Chapter 31. An English girl visits the women's quarter in a Hindu home where the women are in prudah.

Raja Rao, The Serpent and the Rope. A contract of east and west's views on marriage.

3. The Role of Women in Modern India

Raja Rao, Kanthapura. The women discuss their role in the Gandhi movement, pp. 102-107.

Premchand, Godaan. Chapter 15 includes a speech given on the role of women in modern India. Have someone report on it.

Further Study:

1. Select two heroines from the Bible and compare them with the heroines of Indian literature.
2. Read Proverbs 31: 10-31 and Ephesians 5: 22-33.
   a) Compare the wife and her relation to her husband as described in these readings with (1) "The Status of Women" from The Laws of Manu (2) the contemporary model of the modern American wife.
3. Write your own modern version of "The Status of Women". Base it on your concept of what our society considers the model of a modern American Woman.

CREATION STORIES

N.B. In addition to the Hindu anthology, other readings are required. Following is a list of suggested sources for these:

The Bible - any translation

Eliade, Mircea. From Primitives to Zen. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc., 1967.

Guerber, H. A. Myths of Northern Lands. New York: American Book Company, 1895.

Hamilton, Edith. Mythology. New York: New American Library, 1942.

Noss, John B. Man's Religions. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1963.

Article (attached) Blakeslee, Alton - AP -

Objectives

1. To compare and contrast creation stories from diverse cultural backgrounds.
2. To explore the universality and timelessness of questions dealing with the origins of man, his world and universe.
3. To demonstrate an understanding of creation stories by writing one.

Content

Discuss with the class the following questions about creation stories:

1. Why has man in all cultures tried to find an explanation of creation?
2. What is he seeking in these explanations?
3. What answers has he found in his search - past and present?

Read a selection of creation stories.

Greek:	From Primitives to Zen p. 114 Mythology Hamilton p. 63-74 Myths of Northern Lands p. 13
Norse:	From Primitives to Zen p. 119 Man's Religions p. 113
Babylonian:	From Primitives to Zen p. 97 Man's Religions p. 69
Persian:	From Primitives to Zen p. 117

Hindu: Anthology p. 8-11, 144-146
Man's Religions p. 135, 140

Judeo-Christian: Genesis I & II
Man's Religions p. 541, 622

Twentieth Century: attached sheet

Classify the stories according to the following motifs:

1. A Supreme Being creates the world by thought, word, or action.
   ex. Genesis
2. The original shapeless mass is divided (separated?)
   ex. Hindu "Song of Creation"
3. An original Being is sacrificed.
   ex. Scandinavian Ymir
4. Combination of any of the above.

In each story discuss the following:

1. Is a reason or cause given for creation? If so, what is it?
2. How is the universe organized or structured?
3. Is any explanation given for natural violations of this structure? drought, storm, flood?
4. Is a hierarchy established among creatures? What is it?
5. Is a moral code established? Explain.
6. Is there an explanation of birth, death, immortality? What is it?
7. When does creation take place? Is any indication given of how time is calculated?

Suggested chart for creation stories:

CREATION CHART

	Greek	Norse	Babylonian	Persian	Judeo-Christian	20th Century
Method of Creation						
Organization of Universe						
Moral Code						
Birth, Death						

Write a non-scientific creation story which includes the 4 major concepts in the above chart.

CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE

Some 13 billion years ago, in one sudden moment, "the clock started ticking; the universe was born," is how Dr. Allan Sandage puts it.

The clock ticked on for about eight billion years before our sun and Earth were born five billion years ago.

Comets account for only a small sliver of the current excitement among astronomers, for there are far stranger objects far out there--quasars, pulsars, X-ray stars and galaxies, new stars being born, and "black holes."

Sandage, of the Hale Observatories here, thinks man now in effect may have seen with his telescopes and his mind most of the way back to the time of the start of the universe, which may then be called the edge of space.

He means astronomers have detected objects from which starlight apparently started almost 12 billion years ago. That could be the "edge" because there was perhaps nothing visible for the first billion years of existence of the universe, back in its cradle days.

If all this sounds incredible, just hang in there, for there is more to come. But, first, refresh your memory about what most astronomers have been saying in recent years:

A main theory is the universe began with a "big Bang," the explosion of a primeval atom, or fireball, some kind of "egg."

The universe is still expanding, with galaxies or families of stars all rushing away from one another. The expansion could keep going until all stars burn out and die, or until gravity pulls it all back together again, until the universe collapses into one huge atom, and then blows up again. Man might be reading this every 100 or 200 billion years or so.

Some astronomers, however, favor the "steady state" theory. This holds that new matter is continually formed, out of energy, to take the space left by the out-rushing galaxies.

Stars are born, live and die. Our sun is a middle-aged star, with perhaps five billion years to go. New stars form out of vast clouds of dust and gases, containing chemical elements manufactured inside burning stars, then spewed out into space.

Humans are "starfolk," Dr. Carl Sagan of Cornell University writes in his new book, The Cosmic Connection: "All of the rocky and metallic material we stand on, the iron in our blood, the calcium in our teeth, the carbon in our genes, were produced billions of years ago in the interior of a red giant star. We are made of star-stuff."

While astronomers give the age of the universe as about 13 billion years, it is not fair to pin them to it. The figure could be 30 per cent higher or lower.

The oldest stars appear to be 12 billion years old, says Sandage. About that time, "the galaxies turned on, and stars began to shine."

Recently, he explains, there has been proof "that stars in our galaxy are of different ages and can be dated, that other galaxies are no older, that there is an oldest age, and that this age is almost the same as that inferred from the expansion motion."

All this has "put astronomy in its present period of extraordinary ferment. The root question of creation, origin and evolution are the central theme."

Among objects being eagerly studied are quasars, so named because they were dubbed quasi-stellar sources when first detected, only by their radio emissions, and later found to be also sources of light. Now they are known to be large, compact objects generating tremendous energy, equal to that of a billion suns like ours. How quasars generate all this energy is one mystery about them.

"It is reasonable to think a quasar is the nucleus of a galaxy at its birth," says Dr. Maarten Schmidt of Hale Observatories and professor of astronomy at the California Institute of Technology. "We think most galaxies were formed early. Quasars radiate up to 1,000 times the energy as the whole galaxy. They are so energetic they can't last too long. They run into their own energy crisis.

"A galaxy may go on for 10 billion years. A quasar may last only 100,000 to one million years or 10 million years

"There were more of them, long ago, a thousand to ten thousand times more, about 10 billion years ago. Right now there are probably at least a million quasars; and maybe 10 million."

Dr. Schmidt, like other astronomers, points out that in studying very distant objects, we are seeing them as they were long ago, when their light started in our direction. Things may since have changed.

Quasars "are luminous enough to be seen at distances so large that light left them when the universe was only 10 per cent of its present age. . . We see conditions in the cosmos as they were close to creation," Dr. Sandage says.

-Alton Blakeslee

DUST CLOUDS MAY BE SPACE CRUCIBLES FOR START OF NEW LIFE

A possible beginning for new life is floating far out in the frigid vacuum of space.

It involves 23 different kinds of chemical molecules detected so far that somehow were formed in huge, dark dust clouds observed in the Milky Way. The Milky Way is the galaxy or family of 200 billion stars to which our sun and Earth belong.

The molecules include ammonia, wood alcohol, formaldehyde, carbon monoxide, water, and atoms of hydrogen joined together.

The significance is that many of these molecules are precursors to more elaborate chemicals essential for the life of plants, animals and man. These include proteins, carbohydrates and chemicals that make up the genes of heredity.

Dust clouds are believed to collapse or condense into new stars and planets. And some astronomers suggest that enough of the "primitive" chemical molecules could survive to give a head start in evolution of the chemicals of life.

Other scientists disagree. They say the cataclysmic birth of suns and planets would tear the moelcules apart, breaking them back down into individual atoms. They would have to recombine over a long time to start the process of forming the complex chemicals for living things.

Stars burning bright are the original nuclear ovens cooking up atoms of nitrogen oxygen, carbon, iron, calcium, silicon (which is sand), and all the chemical elements known on Earth.

The stars spew them out when they die in slow or violent expansion, creating the clouds of dust and gases. On moonless nights, you might see dust clouds as dark bands in the mammoth river of Milky Way stars.

How numerous astronomers think the dust clouds are special chemical laboratories, even perhaps crucibles for life, where individual atoms combine into molecules in the almost total vacuum of space and at temperatures near absolute zero. The field of interstellar chemistry is attracting more and more attention of chemists.

One current theory is that some of the solid dust particles act as catalysts or governors to promote the combination of atoms into molecules.

Molecules made of as many as seven different kinds of atoms have been detected in a dust cloud.

Most of the 23 chemicals have been found in the last few years; and most by radio astronomers. They identify atoms or molecules by their own special "fingerprints" of the different wavelengths of energy or radiation that they emit at radio frequencies.

Chemical precursors of life may have come to Earth aboard meteorites. Dr. Edward Anders and associates at the University of Chicago think organic matter formed on meteorites, which themselves formed in a cooling solar cloud of nebula. Meteorites were never part of some larger solid object by this theory.

Meteorites with their chemical cargoes could have fallen on a primitive Earth, creating a head-start condition for more elaborate molecules necessary for life.

Fatty acids and amino acids, the building blocks for proteins, have been identified in some meteorites. So also have purines and pyrimidines, which are part of DNA, the molecules of the genetic code of life.

The universe is assumed to have had a beginning.

So it is assumed it will have an ending.

Will it keep expanding, with all the galaxies, including ours, continuing to rush away from one another, forever?

Or will gravity slow it down, putting on the brakes, and pull it all back together into a primeval atom which then could explode again to start the universe all over again? Has this happened before? Is this trip No. 1 or 20 for the universe?

-Alton Blakeslee

HINDU STAGES OF LIFE

Objectives

1. To discover in the religious literature the four Hindu ashramas (stages of life).

2. To discover in the religious literature the dharma (duties) of each stage.

Content

1. Read Laws of Manu "Stages of Life", p. 150-3.
   List the four stages and the dharma for each.

2. Brahmacarya Ashrama (Student Stage)
   Read and discuss Upanishads "Instructing the Student" p. 18.
   What is expected of the student in regard to his attitude toward his teacher, parents, and studies?
   Compare and contrast this with what is expected of students in your high school.

   Read and discuss Crest Jewel of Discrimination p. 198-203.
   What is the goal of human existence?
   How may the student or disciple attain this?
   What is the student's attitude toward his teacher?

   Read and discuss Gandhi p. 282.
   How did Gandhi feel about his violation of the student ashrama?

3. Grihastha Ashrama (Householder Stage)
   Read and discuss "Savitri" p. 35-65.
   What are the duties of a wife?
   How does Savitri perform these duties?
   What does her dialogue with Yama reveal about her attitude toward performing her duties?

   Read and discuss Kama Sutra. p. 139-142.
   How is the practice of Artha and Kama related to the middle stage of life?
   How is dharma (duty) explained?

4. Vanaprastha Ashrama (Forest Dweller or Hermit Stage)
   Read and discuss Bhartrihari p. 227-35.
   What is the attitude of the poet toward the pleasures of the world?
   What does he regard as the solution?

5. Sannyasa Ashrama (Ascetic or Holy Man Stage)
Read and discuss Crest Jewel p. 219-21.
What does the Master say are the attributes of the ascetic stage?
How does he describe the qualities of Atman?
What is the true meaning of liberation (moksha)?

Read and discuss the Upanishads.
p. 29 "Brahman".
p. 30 "Transmigration".
p. 32 "Spiritual Knowledge".
These three selections describe the knowledge of Brahman/Atman sought by the ascetic.
What are the attributes of the Self (atman), Brahman, and the relationship between the two?
How is the man who possesses this knowledge described?
Re-read Laws of Manu "Attaining Moksha". p. 153.
How is the goal of this stage of life regarded by the Hindu?

6. Discuss what this highly structured way of life says about Hindu life?
What freedom might there be within this structure?
Contrast the stages of life with similar stages of life in Western society.
What advantages and disadvantages might there be in both societies?
What problems are there in our multiplicity of choices?
Could you accept this system for yourself? Why or why not?
Could your parents accept this system?
What alternative arrangements are possible?

HINDU SELF-DISCIPLINE

Objectives

1. To discover in the religious literature the Hindu attitude to self-discipline and self-control: its purposes, importance and results.

2. To contrast the Hindu and Western attitudes toward self-discipline.

Content

1. Discuss the term "self-discipline".
   What do the students understand by the term?
   In what ways do they use self-discipline?
   What problems do they encounter?
   What is the school's attitude toward self-discipline?
   What is Western society's attitude? Discuss fasting, abstinence, Lent, Rosh Hashonah.

2. Read Upanishads.
   p. 16 "Yoga".
   p. 20 (bottom - "Know this") - 21.
   Analyze the chariot metaphor.
   What "journey's end" is there for "the man whose charioteer is wisdom"?
   Write a Western 20th century version of the chariot metaphor.

3. Read Yoga Sutras.
   p. 154-9.
   What is given as the purpose of yoga?
   What are the preliminary exercises?
   What obstacles stand in the way?
   Discuss ekagrata - how does it apply to the actor, athlete, artists, musician? How would it be helpful to a student?

4. Read Bhagavad Gita.
   p. 65-91.
   In Chapters I and II - state Arjuna's dilemma.
   - why does Krishna tell Arjuna not to grieve for his kinsmen?
   - what is to be gained by regarding pleasure and pain as the same?
   - how does Krishna tell Arjuna he should perform his duty?
   - what are some of the results of this kind of discipline?
   - would the high school football star be willing to do his duty in this way - i.e. play all games at 11 p.m. with no audience?

5. Read section on Gandhi.

p. 283-90 "Brahmacarya".

Why did Gandhi feel brahmacarya was important?

What were some of the problems he encountered?

What did he feel were some of the rewards of the brahmacarya vow?

p. 293-301 "The Vows of Satyagraha".

Discuss Gandhi's goal of Satya or Truth. Contrast with goals of Western society. What are our goals? Do we seek the kind of Truth Gandhi describes?

p. 282-3 "My Double Shame".

Discuss student stage and necessity of dedication, chastity, obedience.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Hindu Narratives

    1. Mahabharata
    2. Ramayana
    3. Panchatantra
    4. Puranas: Parade of Ants and Sati

2. Hindu Poetry

    1. Gita Govinda
    2. Cloud Messenger
    3. Flood of Beauty
    4. In Praise of Shiva's Greatness
    5. Bhartrihari
    6. Kabir
    7. Gitangali

3. Myth-Religion-Philosophy

    1. Vedas
    2. Upanishads
    3. Kama Sutra
    4. Laws of Manu
    5. Yoga Sutras of Patanjali
    6. Puranas
    7. Hymns of the Tamil Saints
    8. Crest Jewel of Discrimination
    9. Ramakrishna
    10. Gandhi

Here are some questions you might find helpful as a guide to planning your course of study.

1. What will be the student objectives for courses developed from the above content groupings?
2. Which selections from the anthology will you assign? Which selections will you recommend for supplemental reading?
3. What contemporary Indian literature will you include in your course of study?
4. What A-V materials will you use?
5. What supplemental materials will be useful?
6. What resource materials will be available to students?
7. How will you evaluate your students?
8. How many weeks of study will be required to teach your course?

RELIGION AND CULTURE

What . . . is the relation of culture to religion? It is clear that a common way of life involves a common view of life, common standards of behaviour and common standards of value, and consequently a culture is a spiritual community which owes its unity to common beliefs and common ways of thought far more than to any uniformity of physical type. Now it is easy for a modern man living in a highly secularized society to conceive this common view of life as a purely secular thing which has no necessary connection with religious beliefs. But in the past, it was not so. From the beginning man regarded his life and the life of society as intimately dependent on forces that lie outside his own control--on superhuman powers which rule both the world and the life of man.

(pp. 48-49)

. . . however universal and spiritual a religion may be, it can never escape the necessity of becoming incarnated in culture and clothing itself in social institutions and traditions, if it is to exert a permanent influence on human life and behaviour.

. . . every historic religion from the lowest to the highest agrees on two fundamental points;--first in the belief in the existence of divine or supernatural powers whose nature is mysterious but which control the world and the life of man; and secondly in the association of these powers with particular men, or things, or places or ceremonies, which act as channels of communication or means of access between the human and the divine worlds.

(p. 54)

Thus while a culture is essentially an organized way of life, it is never conceived as a purely man-made order. The social way of life is founded on a religious law of life, and this law in turn depends on non-human powers towards which man looks with hope and fear, powers which can be known in some fashion but which remain essentially mysterious, since they are superhuman and supernatural.

Hence the relation between religion and culture is always a two-sided one. The way of life influences the approach to religion, and the religious attitude influences the way of life.

(p. 57)

All this may seem to suggest that religion is so conditioned by culture and economics that it is itself a product of culture. But however far this process of cultural conditioning goes--and it certainly may go very far--we can never exclude the alternative relation--that culture is moulded and changed by religion. It is obvious that a man's way of life is the way by which he apprehends reality--and consequently the way in which he approaches religion.

Therefore while in practice the religion of a people is limited and conditioned by its culture, in theory--and even in the theory of the primitive himself--culture is a deliberate effort to bring human life into relation with divine reality and into subordination to divine power.

(p. 58)

. . . the culture process is open to change from either direction. Any material change which transforms the external conditions of life will also change the cultural way of life and thus produce a new religious attitude. And likewise any spiritual change which transforms men's views of reality will tend to change their way of life and thus produce a new form of culture.

(p. 59)

. . . in so far as a culture represents a natural way of life, it reflects a distinct aspect of reality and has its own particular truth and its own scale of values which provide a way of approach to transcendent truths and values, and open, as it were, a new window to heaven as well as to earth.

Therefore the particular goods of particular cultures are not dead ends; they are the media by which the universal good is apprehended and through which these cultures are orientated towards the good that transcends their own power and knowledge.

(p. 62)

Any religious movement which adopts a purely critical and negative attitude to culture is therefore a force of destruction and disintegration which mobilizes against it the healthiest and most constructive elements in society--elements which can by no means be dismissed as worthless from the religious point of view. On the other hand, the identification of religion with the particular cultural synthesis which has been achieved at a definite point of time and space by the action of historical forces is fatal to the universal character of religious truth. It is indeed a kind of idolatry--the substitution of an image made by man for the external transcendent reality. If this identification is carried to its extreme conclusion, the marriage of religion and culture is equally fatal to either partner, since religion is so tied to the social order that it loses its spiritual character, and the free development of culture is restricted by the bonds of religious tradition until the social organism becomes as rigid and lifeless as a mummy.

(p. 206)

What then are the conditions which made a fruitful cooperation between religion and culture possible? On the one hand, the assertion of the absolute transcendent spiritual claims of religion must not be interpreted as a denial of the limited, historically conditioned and temporal values of culture, and on the other hand the forms of a particular culture, even when they are inspired or consecrated by a religious ideal, must not be regarded as possessing universal religious validity.

(pp. 208-209)

Christopher Dawson
From Religion and Culture

EAST AND WEST

The white man, says Laurens Van Der Post came into Africa (and Asia and America for that matter) like a one-eyed giant, bringing with him the characteristic split and blindness which were at once his strength, his torment, and his ruin. With his self-isolated and self-scrutinizing individual mind, Western man was master of concepts and abstractions. He was the king of quantity and the driver of those forces over which quantitative knowledge gave him supremacy without understanding. Because he ruled matter without understanding it, he faced his bodily self as an object which he could not comprehend though he could analyze and tamper with its every part. He submitted to passions which, though he no longer regarded them as devils, were nevertheless inscrutable and objective forces flying at him from the dark outside the little circle illumined by a pragmatic and self-complacent moral reason. The one-eyed giant had science without wisdom, and he broke in upon ancient civilizations which (like the medieval West) had wisdom without science: wisdom which transcends and unites, wisdom which dwells in body and soul together and which, more by means of myth, of rite, of contemplation, than by scientific experiment, opens the door to a life in which the individual is not lost in the cosmos and in society but found in them. Wisdom which made all life sacred and meaningful--even that which later ages came to call secular and profane.

It is true that neither the ancient wisdoms nor the modern sciences are complete in themselves. They do not stand alone. They call for one another. Wisdom without science is unable to penetrate the full sapiential meaning of the created and material cosmos. Science without wisdom leaves man enslaved to a world of unrelated objects in which there is no way of discovering (or creating) order and deep significance in man's own pointless existence. The vocation of modern man was to bring about their union in preparation for a new age. The marriage was wrecked on the rocks of the white man's dualism and of the inertia, the incomprehension, of ancient and primitive societies. We enter the post-modern (perhaps the post-historic!) era in total disunity and confusion. But while the white man has always, naturally, blamed the traditional ancient cultures and the primitive "savage" whom he never understood, it is certainly clear that if the union of science and wisdom has so far not been successful it is not because the East would not listen to the West: the East has been all too willing to listen. The West has not been able to listen to the East, to Africa, and to the now practically extinct voice of primitive America. As a result of this the ancient wisdoms have themselves fallen into disrepute and Asia no longer dares listen to herself!

The split of the European mind has become universal. All man (says L.L. Whyte) are caught in the "fundamental division between deliberate activity organized by static concepts, and the instinctive and spontaneous life." This dissociation, which was fruitful in the Renaissance, has now reached a point of mad development, of "behavior patterns unrelated to organic needs" and a "relentless passion for quantity". . ."uncontrolled industrialism and excess of analytical thought". . ."without the catharsis of rhythmic relaxation or satisfying achievement."

There have of course been spurious attempts to bring East and West together. One need not review all the infatuated theosophies of the nineteenth century. Nor need one bother to criticize the laughable syncretisms which have occupied the talents of publicists (more often Eastern than Western) in which Jesus, Buddha, Confucius, Tolstoy, Marx, Nietzsche, and anyone else you like join in the cosmic dance which turns out to be not Shiva's but just anybody's. However, the comparison of Eastern and Western religious philosophy is, in our time, reaching a certain level of seriousness and this is one small and hopeful sign. The materials for synthesis of science and wisdom are not lacking.

Thomas Merton
From "Gandhi and the One-Eyed Giant"
Jubilee 12 (January 1965): 12-13

THE HINDU TEMPLE

It is difficult to understand the nature of temple worship unless it is realized in the first instance that a temple is a sanctuary of a god or goddess and not a place of public worship like a church. Divine service consists, not of common prayer, but of ceremonies performed by priests. Worship is not congregational as in Christian churches; the ceremonies are not concerned with the landmarks of a worshipper's life, such as baptisms, marriages and deaths; marriage and funeral rites take place in private houses and not in temples. The temples are in any case not designed for crowds of worshippers, except in South India.

p. 93.

. . . in the heart of the temple will be found the adytum or sanctuary of the god to whom it is dedicated.

p. 94.

Ritual is the essence of temple worship, the ceremonies being performed by the priests with set motions, in set words, and at set times. The extent to which anthropomorphism enters into it may be realized from the daily round of ceremonies performed at different hours of the day in the temple of Jagannath at Puri.

p. 95.

It begins with a hymn warning the gods (Jagannath, his brother, and his sister) to leave their couches as the sun is about to rise, and is followed by setting some camphor on fire and waving blazing torches. The gods are then presented with cakes made of rice, flour and water, and a gong is beaten. After this they are supposed to bathe and dress. Bathing is done by proxy, i.e. attendants sit in front of some brass plates, in which the images are reflected, and pretend to clean their teeth and rinse their mouths, and water is poured into brass tubs. The images are dressed and then the gods give audience, i.e. the public are admitted and allowed to see the images and present offerings. Early breakfast follows, i.e. fried rice covered with sugar and clarified butter is put in front of the images. At about 10 a.m. the breakfast proper, which consists of such things as rice, vegetables and cakes, is served, and, when this has been done, betel-nut is presented for chewing and the clothes on the images are changed (as is also done after other meals). After a midday meal cots are brought and placed before them, so that they may have an imaginary siesta. They enjoy an evening meal at between 8 p.m. and 9 p.m., and an hour or two later are anointed. At midnight they are garlanded from head to foot with wreaths of flowers, and sweet-smelling flowers are put to their noses to smell. Finally they are given a light repast, with music and hymns, and are put to bed, couches being brought and placed before the throne. The whole ritual is based on ideas which are diametrically opposed to the saying of the Psalmist that idols have eyes but see not, ears but hear not, noses but smell not.

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In any case the layman does not really require a temple as a place of worship, for worship can be conducted at home, where there is generally a deity enshrined in some way or another.

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L. S. S. O'Malley
From Popular Hinduism

WHO CREATED CASTE?

V. S. Pramar rejects the popular notion that the Aryans were the authors of an institution which has been the bane of Indian society.

To most people the phenomenon of caste appears to be so obvious and self-explanatory that no effort is ever made to discover its real origins. Legislators, social reformers and writers find the popular and readymade theories about caste so convincing that they easily accept them without ever realizing that these beliefs and conjectures are both superficial and misleading.

The most fashionable among these theories is that caste was the social system imposed by the conquering Aryans upon the indigenous aboriginals, and that under its influence the natural occupational differences then existing in Indian society became petrified into institutional differences of caste.

This theory proclaimed, in other words, that the social and occupational divisions of caste were brought about by the Aryan/Brahminical dominance over a subjugated and oppressed population. Since Sanskrit literature gave frequent supporting evidence to this surmise, it was adjudged to be true and no further enquiry was made to ascertain whether actual caste practice was in consonance with caste theory. Now, the moment such a comparative enquiry is made, certain fundamental contradictions reveal themselves.

Consider the following examples. If caste were merely an Aryan imposition which aimed at preserving Aryan purity, why is it that a Brahmin family from, say, Gujarat does not intermarry with a Brahmin family from Uttar Pradesh even though both are of Aryan descent and have the same occupation and caste? And why is it, on the other hand, that princely families of North and South India intermarry even though the one is clearly of Aryan descent while the other is of Dravidian?

Further why do not the Gonds and Oraons intermarry when both are tribals and both lived previously by hunting? None of these real caste practices can be explained by the popular and commonly accepted explanation of an Aryan imposition of caste. This theory is in fact a superficial and belated rationalization of a phenomenon which existed in India long before the coming of the Aryans, and to understand its real origins we must turn, not to literary evidence, but to the evidence of sociology.

The core of the caste system consists of the belief in pollution, which is in turn related to the primitive concept of taboo. To the primitive mind the external world was peopled with spirits of an unpredictable nature: if provoked they would turn malignant, if placated they would prove beneficial. While some spirits were associated with specific places, such as rivers and groves, others were identified with specific human activities such as hunting and agriculture.

No human activity could succeed without the goodwill of the associated spirits: crops would not grow, the hunt would fail, the potter's pots would crack, and the blacksmith's iron would split. Every activity was thought of as in some way mysterious and potentially dangerous, for the offended spirits might do much worse than merely cause material damage. It became therefore necessary to placate with the appropriate esoteric magic the associated spirits before undertaking any important human activity.

Now, as primitive society advanced to the stage where specialization of activities took place, it led to a situation where a particular group, say that of blacksmiths, would have the prerogative to a body of esoteric ritual intimately connected with their profession. They alone would know how to work the magic necessary to iron-smelting and, on account of the potential danger involved, iron-smelting would be taboo for members of all other occupations.

This taboo would in due course be extended to the very persons themselves, who would thus form a closed group socially segregated from all others. Any kind of intimate contact by an outsider with an iron-smelter would mean a breaking of the rule of taboo, and the result would be a state of pollution for the offender.

It should be noted here that the conception of pollution is related, not to notions of cleanliness or uncleanliness (as in later, rationalized caste theory), but to notions of magical danger. And just as there would arise a closed community of blacksmiths, so would all the other specialized occupational groups form themselves into segregated social units.

This then is the manner in which the Indian castes were originally formed. Their formation was thus the result of a spontaneous growth based on the beliefs then existing in primitive society, and in its essence caste owed nothing whatsoever to Aryan influence.

There is one possible objection that may be raised against the above explanation of caste origins, namely that caste ought then to have been a worldwide phenomenon since taboo and pollution are worldwide beliefs. The simple answer to this is, first, that among primitive tribes elsewhere the process of specialization had not hardened into social rigidity; secondly, the state of taboo was conceived as of temporary duration, lasting only so long as the associated activities were in progress. Once the activity attracting taboo was over the individual reverted to his normal everyday role and was free to mix with the other groups.

In India, on the other hand, taboo was thought of as a permanent state associated with the individual not only during the moment of performance, but to the whole of his personality and to all of his acts, and this quality embraced all his relatives and descendants as well. Caste in India was thus simply the concepts of taboo and pollution taken to their extreme conclusion.

And while there is no direct evidence it would be logical to assume that actual caste divisions existed in India much before the coming of the Aryans. This assumption is supported by the fact observable even today that notions of taboo and pollution are much more intense in South India and among the lower castes of North India than they are among the so-called higher Aryan castes. There is a strong likelihood that caste was in fact of Dravidian origin, and that this was, like so much else, accepted by Aryan society.

What the Aryans, however, did contribute to caste was to give it a theoretical and institutional framework. They produced a mythology to explain its origins, developed injunctions to regulate its conduct, and organized the various castes into an ascending order of hierachy. It is this later rationalizing of caste as an intellectual system which has so misled modern observers.

The other serious misconception about caste is that it was given a racial bias by the supposedly race-conscious and fair-skinned Aryans. Here too the sociological facts are rather different. Primitive man everywhere, living in a hostile environment, is instinctively suspicious and afraid of that which is unknown and strange.

Individuals belonging to tribes of differing ethnic stock will automatically view each other with mistrust and hostility. The initial basis of this hostility on the part of the one is the strangeness of the other, but it soon becomes associated with secondary racial characteristics. Racial hostility is thus a universal human phenomenon and there is no cause to regard it as an Aryan prerogative. The racial hostility of the Aryan towards the Indian tribal was reciprocated by the latter.

Not only this, but racial hostility existed among all the numerous differing ethnic groups which inhabited the sub-continent. This explains why groups such as the Gonds and the Oraons, both of whom are tribals having a racial and occupational similarity, do not freely intermix or intermarry. And it is this tribal hostility which explains why a Gond blacksmith will not marry into an Oraon blacksmith family, even though both have an identical occupation and hence may be deemed to be immune from the dangers of taboo.

The ease with which estrangement arises between groups which are inherently related and similar to each other can be seen from the following example. If one section of a particular tribe migrates to a new settlement some distance away and if environmental or economic factors act as a barrier to its social contact with the parent tribe, it will not take long before the two groups begin to regard themselves as to distinct communities. They will then cease to intermix or intermarry even though both are racially identical.

The acquisition of differing customs, habits, speech and nomenclature (deriving from the differing regions they inhabit) will further deepen the estrangement, and eventually two new sub-castes will evolve from what had originally been one single group. It is in this way that hundreds of Indian sub-castes have originated. And this is the reason why the Brahmin of Gujarat does not intermarry with the Brahmin of Uttar Pradesh.

Fundamental to all these divisions of castes in India is the belief that any difference between any two communities, either real or imagined, is at once construed as a gulf that becomes unbridgeable due to the notions of taboo and pollution.

Finally, I turn to the only real Aryan contribution to caste: namely caste hierarchy. When one scrutinizes caste hierarchy, one finds broadly two divisions: an upper caste, i.e. those which follow practices considered honourable by the Aryans, and a lower caste, i.e. those which follow tribal practices considered inferior by them. In other words, it was Aryan social values which were superimposed upon the existing caste structure, and which served to create an ascending order of castes in conformity with these values.

Priestly functions and political functions were given supremacy within the hierarchy, to be followed by those of production and services. Practices thought to be inferior or polluting, such as the eating of carrion, the skinning of dead animals, pre-marital sexual freedom (a widespread custom among tribals), etc., would depress a caste within the hierarchy.

But it must not be assumed that caste hierarchy was identical with racial hierarchy. There is ample evidence to show that the priests and kings belonging to the aboriginal tribes were accorded high social status, an and in many instances the tribal priests were absorbed into the Brahminical fold. The numerous examples of intermarriage between the families of Aryan and tribal kings also prove that it was not colour or race which determined status, but the kind of social functions performed and the manner in which they were performed. If these functions bore a resemblance to Aryan customs then they were given Aryan status.

One important consequence of this policy was, of course, that if any tribe or group wished to rise in the caste hierarchy, it had perforce to adopt Aryan customs and abandon its own. This process of acculturation has been called 'Sanskritisation' and it was resorted to on a large scale by all the lower castes. They would, for example, give up customs such as beef-eating, widow remarriage and burial of the dead, and in the religious sphere would turn more and more to Brahminical forms of worship. By these means the lower tribal castes would acquire respectability and entry into the organized Hindu caste system.

Almost all the lower Hindu castes today were originally tribals who have thus risen in the social scale. What is today officially described as a 'scheduled tribe' is merely that remaining portion of an originally much larger body of tribals most of whom have transformed themselves into Hindus.

The rise in status had no theoretical and practical limits, that is to say it was not at all the case that a Hinduised tribal group had to occupy only the lowest rung of the social ladder, and there are historically recorded cases of Munda and Gond tribes which have through time acquired the status of Rajputs and who now freely intermarry with the best of Aryan families.

This phenomenon of social mobility and intermarriage has been particularly extensive among all those groups which took to the profession of soldiering, and large segments of the so-called martial races of India have tribal origins. Many of the 'high' caste landowners accused of oppressing the 'lower' castes are in fact members of these very low castes but have through time worked their way up to a higher status.

The whole caste situation in India is so complex that to speak facilely of 'high' castes and 'low' castes and of 'Aryan' oppression is to completely distort the sociological history of India. It must also be kept in mind that once a tribal group has achieved acceptance as a 'high' caste, it naturally wishes to keep this fact a secret and it masks its real origins by a display of 'Aryanism' far in excess of that which normally belonged to Aryan society. All these complicating factors should make us wary of using popular categories when speaking of caste.

"The Times of India"
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THE MAHABHARATA AND THE RAMAYANA

The religious and cultural life of the whole of the Indian subcontinent and much of the rest of Asia has been deeply influenced by the two great epic poems of Hinduism, the Mahabharata (pronounced Ma-ha-bah-ra-ta, accent on "bah") and the Ramayana (pronounced Rah-my-ana, accent on "my"). Putting aside all question of their merits as literature, which by any standard are very high, they are among the most important poems in the world.

Of the two the Mahabharata is in essence the older, its nuclear story having been transmitted from the shadowy period following the composition of the Rig Veda the oldest literature of India. A few of the names of rulers, sages and priests mentioned in the Mahabharata also occur in sources of the later Vedic period, and the story of the epic may have developed around traditions of a great battle which took place about 900 B.C.

But with the passing centuries the account was so enlarged and developed by the introduction of new characters and incidents that its historical kernel cannot now be established. There is even some reason to believe that the divine hero Krishna, who plays such an important role in the story as we now have it, was grafted into the poem, and had no part in the original martial tradition out of which it developed. From references in other Sanskrit texts, it seems that the story, in a form not very different from that era and perhaps as early as 400 B.C.

The plot of the Mahabharata is a complicated one. Like the Greek stories of the Trojan war out of which emerged the Iliad, and like the cycle of Germanic myth and legend which crystalized into the Nibelungenlied, the Indian epic tells of a bitter quarrel which developed into a war of extermination. The five sons of Pandu are unjustly deprived of their ancestral kingdom by their wicked cousins, the Kauravas, and they regain it after a tremendous battle in which all their enemies and most of their friends are slain.

Echoes of a heroic age are heard throughout the narrative portions of the epic, and the martial values of bravery, loyalty and truthfulness are much encouraged. Heroes and villains alike never refuse challenges, whether to battle, to contests of skill, or to games of chance, and few major characters are guilty of serious cowardice. The atmosphere of the main narrative is that of a society just emerging from tribalism, in which personal loyalty to one's chief and fellow clansmen is still very strongly emphasized.

But the Mahabharata as we have it contains more than the poetic account of a legendary war. It is replete with interpolations of all kinds, which were obviously introduced long after the main narrative was composed.

The longest of these is the Santi Parvan, the twelfth of the 18 sections or books into which the epic is divided, and by no means the shortest of them. Here the slow death of the wounded Bhishma, the elder statesman of the Kauravas, is made the pretext for a long series of didactic passages on many aspects of policy, ethics and religion.

Similarly Yudhishthira, the eldest of the five heroes, is a passionate but inexpert gambler, and it is as a result of his vice that he and his brothers are forced into exile. This gives the cue for the introduction of the lengthy tale of king Nala, another addicted gambler of even older days who lost his wife and kingdom through dicing, but regained them at last after many adventures.

This interpolation, in fluent easy verse, often forms the student's first introduction to Sanskrit literature in the original. From its style and content it appears to be at least as old as the main narrative of the epic, and looks back to the days of small semi-tribal kingdoms before the time of the Buddha.

Undoubtedly, the most important interpolation of the Mahabharata is the Bhagavad-Gita, the long religious poem which has become the most influential text of modern Hinduism. Of all works of Sanskrit literature it is probably the most widely known outside India, and it has been translated into many languages and read by millions who know nothing else of the epic poem which contains it.

A pretext for its inclusion is provided, just before the commencement of the great battle, by the misgivings of Arjuna, the second of the five heroes, at the thought of fighting his own kinsfolk and friends. His mentor Krishna strengthens Arjuna's resolution with this long religious poem, itself possibly a conflation of verses from more than one source, and reveals himself as the great God Vishnu incarnate.

Shorter interpolations are numerous, and include the well known and beautiful legend of the faithful wife Savitri, who saves her husband from the clutches of the god of death, the story of Rama, a brief summary of the other great Hindu epic, and that of Shakuntala, in a version significantly different from the plot of Kalidasa's famous drama.

These many episodes, both narrative and didactic, seem to have been incorporated into the text of the Mahabharata by various editors in the course of the five centuries between the Maurya and Gupta empires, from about 200 B.C. to A.D. 300. By about A.D. 500 the full epic existed in something like its present form.

A terminal date may be established from the lists of tribes and peoples which occur here and there in the text. Such lists include the Hunas (the Hephthalites or White Huns), who could hardly have been known to the Indians until about A.D. 400, when they had established themselves in Bactria, but they do not include other peoples such as the Gurharas, who first appear on the scene in the sixth century.

But, even after the closing of the canon of the text, manuscripts were subjected to many minor emendations and interpolations, and three main textual traditions of the Mahabharata have been traced. Now the splendid edition of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research institute of Poona, which has just been completed after the labour of many scholars for over forty years, has provided an established text of the epic, as it existed at the end of the Gupta period.

Thanks to the great expansion which it has undergone the Mahabharata is something much more than a narrative epic, though it is quite possible to extract the narrative from the many interpolations and present it as a heroic poem.

The largest single poem in the world, containing nearly 100,000 couplets or stanzas of two verses each, or about seven times the size of the Iliad and Odyssey combined, it has aptly been described as an encylopaedia of early Hinduism. It treats of almost every aspect of the religious, political and social life of the India of the time, viewed chiefly from the angle of the orthodox brahmin. It contains much didactic material out of which developed the Dharmasastras, or legal texts, and the Puranas, the long poems on myth, legend and religious practice which were compiled from the Gupta period onwards. Thus, even though no faith can be placed on the historicity of its story, it is of the utmost importance to the historian.

The plethora of didactic interpolations, which have expanded the poem to so unwieldy a length, have somewhat reduced its popularity. The main story is widely known among ordinary Hindus, however, and later authors have written poems, dramas and prose stories around many of its episodes, in both Sanskrit and the modern languages of India.

Abridged versions of the Mahabharata, omitting many of the interpolations, exist in most languages of India and Southeast Asia, and the story of the five heroes, much adapted to local taste and tradition, is still popular in the wayang, the shadow theatre of Indonesia.

Few but Hindu pandits and serious students, however, have read the whole Mahabharata from beginning to end, even in translation, and in the form in which we have it it can never become a "popular classic." But in India it has long served as a mine of material for later authors, and it remains so to this day.

The second of the great epics, the Ramayana, differs from the Mahabharata both in theme and in character.

It tells of the righteous prince Rama, who is unjustly exiled by his father, Dasaratha, king of Ayodhya. Accompanied by his beautiful wife Sita and his loyal younger brother Lakshmana he takes refuge in the wild forests of central and southern India (see "The Exile of Rama", page 30), where the three have many adventures, the most exciting of which is the capture of Sita by Ravana, the demon king of Ceylon, and her ultimate rescue by the brothers, helped by an army of monkeys.

At least Rama regains his ancestral kingdom, but the end of the story is not altogether happy, since in order to satisfy public opinion Rama is compelled to put away Sita, who has lost her ritual purity residing in the house of another man, though in captivity she was perfectly chaste and loyal to her husband.

The Ramayana is an account of the marvellous adventures of an almost supernatural hero, embroidered with wonders of every kind, and written in formal courtly language. For a European parallel, we should look not to the Iliad or even to the Aeneid, but to such works as Wolfram's Parzifal or perhaps Ariosto's Orlando Furioso.

The marvellous and supernatural elements are intensified in the first and last books, where Rama, the hero of the poem, is revealed as an incarnation of the great God Vishnu, who took human form in order to save the world from the molestations of demons. Hence, Rama is worshipped as a god to this day, and the Ramayana is looked on as a sacred text.

The epic has many passages of drama and pathos, and shows considerable psychological insight. It inculcates the virtues of courage, loyalty, faith, forgiveness and fellowship.

The Ramayana does not contain very lengthy interpolations, and in style and content it gives a much greater sense of unity than does the Mahabharata. Moreover, its length is less than a quarter of that of the other epic. The composition is more literary in character, and many similes and metaphors suggest classical courtly Sanskrit poetry of the kind written by Kalidasa. Lengthy descriptive passages punctuate the narrative, and these include beautiful word-pictures of the seasons of the Indian year, such as became formal and regular features of the later Sanskrit kavya or courtly epic.

The account of Rama's exile, for example, contains many fine passages of natural description, as when Rama describes the season of the rains.

"See how much lovelier now the
[forest are,
green from the constant rain, and gay
[with dancing peacocks.
The roaring clouds, weary with loads
[of water,
rest on the peaks, escorted by the
[cranes,
which, flying in line, rejoicing in the
[clouds,
seem like a chain of lotuses, wind-
[blown across the sky.
Green grass and flowers cover the
[warm earth,
like a lady wrapped in a many-coloured
[blanket." (1)

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(1)Translated by the author.

Successive editors introduced material from many sources into the narrative of the Mahabharata, which, despite its ascription to a single author, the sage Vyasa, and its generally correct Sanskrit, has something of the anonymity of folk-literature about it. The Ramayana is also ascribed to a single author, the sage Valmiki, who is introduced in the first and last of the poem's seven cantos as a contemporary of the hero, and as the protector of the pregnant Sita when she is cast out by her husband.

But the Ramayana is also clearly the work of more than one author, though its structure is not so bewilderingly complex as that of the longer epic. The style of the first and last cantos is significantly different from that of the central five. These five cantos can stand alone as a complete story and have no real need of the other two. Except for a few obvious interpolations, they treat Rama as a mortal hero, whereas in the first and last cantos he is wholly divine, the full incarnation of the great God Vishnu.

There are many other arguments which prove with virtual certainty that at least two and probably three hands have contributed to the poem in its final form. But the most important part of the story is the work of one man, a conscious poet far more sophisticated and sensitive than the nameless composers of the Mahabharata.

Since a synopsis of the Ramayana story occurs in the Mahabharata it seems that the former was in existence before the process of adding interpolations to the latter came to an end. Nevertheless the Ramayana seems more recent than the Mahabharata narrative, and its central portion may have been composed no later than about the beginning of our era. The capital city of the Kurus, Hastinapura, on which the story of the Mahabharata centers, is in the western part of the Ganga basin, some fifty miles to the north of modern Delhi (1). Ayodhya, the capital of Rama, is in eastern Uttar Pradesh, and the western part of the sub-continent plays little part in the Ramayana story.

In the Mahabharata the Deccan and the Dravidian south of India are little mentioned, except in lists of places and peoples which have obviously been worked over in the course of the centuries in which the epic developed. In the Ramayana these regions, as well as Ceylon, play an essential part in the story, though they are looked on as shadowy and wild lands, chiefly the abode of demons and of monkeys which talk and act like men.

The court of Dasaratha in the Ramayana is that of a typical Hindu ruler of classical times, not that of a chieftain such as we meet in the Mahabharata story, who is merely the first among his unruly peers. Though the Hindu tradition places Rama many thousands of years before the heroes of the Mahabharata, the Ramayana reflects a much more developed phase of Hindu culture than does the Mahabharata narrative.

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(1)Editor's note.--The site of Hastinapura has recently been excavated. Romila Thapar writes in A History of India, "a part of it was found to have been washed away in about 800 B.C. by the flooding of the river Ganges. This incident is referred to in the Puranas as having occurred in the reign of the seventh successor to the king ruling at Hastinapura immediately after the (Mahabharata) war, which would suggest c. 900 B.C. as the approximate date for the war."

A strange and very tame version of the story preserved in the traditions of Theravada Buddhism suggests that there actually was, sometime in the centuries before Buddha's birth, a king named Dasaratha whose righteous son Rama was wrongly exiled but in the end regained his birthright.

But the exciting account of the capture of Sita by Ravana and her ultimate rescue finds no place in the Buddhist version, and this suggests that the Ramayana, like so many heroic tales of ancient and medieval times, is a conflation from more than one source, and that some of the most dramatic parts of the finished story had not place in the original tale. "It is, like the Mahabharata, a legend, not a piece of sober history, or even the reflection of the historical process of the Aryanization of the Deccan."

Much work has now been done in unravelling the skeins of medieval European stories such as those of the Nibelungenlied and the Chanson de Roland, both of which have been shown to have no reliable historical content; and there is no reason why the Indian epics should be more historically trustworthy than their European counterparts. They are far more than mere historical narratives; rather they are among the greatest poems in the world's literature, and as such they have inspired countless millions of people for some two thousand years.

The Ramayana has impressed itself even more deeply than the Mahabharata upon the soul of Hindu India. It has been translated, or more often freely paraphrased, in almost every Indian language, and in most of the languages of South-East Asia. These versions have adapted the story of Rama to the local cultures, and made it part of the local traditions. It has been heard repeatedly by many generations of illiterate peasants, who not only have been thrilled by its stirring and often touching story, but also have been taught the virtues of love, forebearance, obedience, courage and truthfulness from it.

Rama has long formed the ideal of Hindu manhood, as Sita has of Hindu womanhood. Rama is invariably obedient and respectful to his parents, loving and protective towards Sita, loyal and affectionate to his relatives and friends, humbly reverent to gods, priests and sages, benevolent and gentle towards his subjects, just and forgiving to his enemies. The obedience and deference which Sita shows to her husband and her husband's family know no bounds, but she possesses intense courage, and is ready to stake her life in defence of her virtue.

The story of Rama has long been part of the cultural tradition of Buddhist Burma, Thailand and Cambodia. The Muslim Indonesians and Malays, who imported the Ramayana from India long before their conversion to Islam, still delight in the ancient Hindu story, adapted slightly to meet the theological requirements of their religion and the different cultural milieu of the Southeast Asian archipelago. The Muslim tradition of India and Pakistan, however, seems to have rejected the ancient legends in their entirety, though in the days of the Mughals Persian paraphrases of both epics were made.

There can be no doubt that the enduring popularity of the two epics has been largely due to the fact that both were adapted at a very early period to the needs of Vaishnava Hinduism. According to the orthodox formulation Vishnu, the High God from whom all creation sprang, has fully incarnated himself nine times in mortal form for the salvation of the world, and will incarnate himself a tenth time at the end of this aeon, in order to restore the age of gold. Of the ten incarnations of Vishnu those most widely revered are Rama and Krishna, the former the hero of the Ramayana and the latter one of the main characters of the Mahabharata.

Thus the epics of India have become holy books, forming a sort of New Testamment to the older, less directly appealing, Vedic literature. Unlike the Vedas, which were intended only for the menfolk of the higher classes, especially the brahmins, the epics might be heard, read and learnt by anyone, even by women, children and untouchables. Thus their influence on the religious life of India has been in the long run far greater than that of the Vedas and Upanishads.

The devotees of Krishna have several other classical texts, notably the Harivamsa and the Bhagavata Purana, with which to sustain their faith. On the other hand, for those who prefer to worship God in the form of Rama the Ramayana in its many translations and paraphrases has become a sort of Bible.

The Hindi Ramayan of Tulsi Das was the only religious text to impress Mahatma Gandhi in his boyhood, and with his last breath he called upon God by the name of Rama. Another great source of his inspiration was the Bhagavad-Gita which forms part of the Mahabharata.

Some Indians of later generations may feel that many of the moral precepts of both epics are hardly applicable to present conditions, and may have doubts about the theology which they reflect, but, whatever their future as sources of religious inspiration, these texts have so deeply affected the heart of Hindu culture and are of such high merit as literature that they can never be forgotten.

The non-Hindu who wishes to understand the culture of Hindu India and the basic values and attitudes of Hinduism cannot do better than read these poems. From the point of view of modern "western" taste, their literary value may be enhanced by judicious abridgement.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BHAGAVAD-GITA

The word gita means "song." Just as in the Bible the Song of Solomon has traditionally been known as "The Song of Songs" because it was interpreted to symbolize the ultimate union of Israel with God (in terms of human married love), so the Bhagavad-Gita is, for Hinduism, the great and unsurpassed song that finds the secret of human life in the unquestioning surrender to and awareness of Krishna.

While the Vedas provide Hinduism with its basic ideas of cult and sacrifice and the Upanishads develop its metaphysic of contemplation, the Bhagavad-Gita can be seen as the great treatise on the "Active Life." But it is really something more, for it tends to fuse worship, action, and contemplation in a fulfillment of daily duty which transcends all three by virtue of a higher consciousness: a consciousness of acting passively, of being an obedient instrument of a transcendent will. The Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Gita can be seen as the main literary supports for the great religious civilization of India, the oldest surviving culture in the world. The fact that the Gita remains utterly vital today can be judged by the way such great reformers as Mohandas Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave[1] both spontaneously based their lives and actions on it, and indeed commented on it in detail for their disciples. The present translation and commentary is another manifestation of the living importance of the Gita. It brings to the West a salutary reminder that our highly activistic and one-sided culture is faced with a crisis that may end in self-destruction because it lacks the inner depth of an authentic metaphysical consciousness. Without such depth, our moral and political protestations are just so much verbiage. If, in the West, God can no longer be experienced as other than "dead," it is because of an inner split and self-alienation which have characterized the Western mind in its single-minded dedication to only half of life: that which is exterior, objective, and quantitative. The "death of God" and the consequent death of genuine moral sense, respect for life, for humanity, for value, has expressed the death of an inner subjective quality of life: a quality which in the traditional religions was experienced in terms of God-consciousness. Not concentration on an idea or concept of God, still less on an image of God, but a sense of presence, of an ultimate ground of reality and meaning, from which life and love could spontaneously flower.

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[1]Vinoba Bhave (1895-), founder of the Bhoodan land reform movement. A saintly, Gandhi-like figure, Bhave walks through the Indian countryside, accompanied by his followers, attempting to persuade landowners to give part of their holdings to the peasants who have no land.

It is important for the Western reader to situate the Gita in its right place. Whereas the Upanishads contemplate the unconditioned, formless Brahma, the Godhead beyond created existence and beyond personality, the Gita deals with brahman under the conditioned form and name of Krishna. There is no "I-Thou" relationship with the unconditioned Brahma, since there can be no conceivable subject-object division or interpersonal division in him, at least according to Hindu thought. In Christianity, too, the Godhead is above and beyond all distinction of persons. The Flemish and Rhenish mystics described it as beyond all form, distinction, and division. Unconditioned Brahma, the Godhead, is not "what we see," it is "who sees." "Thou art that." Unconditioned brahman is pure Consciousness. Pure Act--but not activity. Conditioned brahman is the "Maker" and "Doer," or rather the "Player" and "Dancer," in the realm of created forms, of time, of history, of nature, of life.

Conditioned brahman, then, appears in the world of nature and time under personal forms (various incarnations for Hinduism, one incarnation only for Christianity). Realization of the Supreme "Player" whose "play" (lila) is manifested in the million-formed inexhaustible richness of beings and events is what gives us the key to the meaning of life. Once we live in awareness of the cosmic dance and move in time with the Dancer, our life attains its true dimension. It is at once more serious and less serious than the life of one who does not sense this inner cosmic dynamism. To live without this illuminated consciousness is to live as a beast of burden, carrying one's life with tragic seriousness as a huge, incomprehensible weight, (see Camus' interpretation of the myth of Sisyphus). The weight of the burden is the seriousness with which one takes one's own individual and separate self. To live with the true consciousness of life centered in Another is to lose one's self-important seriousness and thus to live life as "play" in union with a Cosmic Player. It is He alone that one takes seriously. But to take Him seriously is to find joy and spontaneity in everything, for everything is gift and grace. In other words, to live selfishly is to bear life as an intolerable burden. To live selflessly is to live in joy, realizing by experience that life itself is love and gift. To be a lover and a giver is to be a channel through which the Supreme Giver manifests His love in the world.

But the Gita presents a problem to some who read it in the present context of violence and war which mark the crisis of the West. The Gita appears to accept and to justify war. Arjuna is exhorted to submit his will to Krishna by going to war against his enemies, who are also his own kin, because war is his duty as a prince and warrior. Here we are uneasily reminded of the fact that in Hinduism as well as in Judaism, Islam, and Christianity, there is a concept of a "holy war" which is "willed by God," and we are furthermore reminded of the fact that, historically, this concept has been secularized and inflated beyond measure. It has now "escalated" to the point where slaughter, violence, revolution, the annihilation of enemies, the extermination of entire populations and even genocide have become a way of life. There is hardly a nation on earth today that is not to some extent committed to a philosophy or to a mystique of violence. One way or other, whether on the left or on the right, whether in defense of a bloated establishment or of an

improvised guerrilla government in the jungle, whether in terms of a police state or in terms of a ghetto revolution, the human race is polarizing itself into camps armed with everything from Molotov cocktails to the most sophisticated technological instruments of death. At such a time, the doctrine that "war is the will of God" can be disastrous if it is not handled with extreme care. For everyone seems in practice to be thinking along some such lines with the exception of a few sensitive and well-meaning souls (mostly the kind of people who will read this book).

The Gita is not a justification of war, nor does it propound a war-making mystique. War is accepted in the context of a particular kind of ancient culture in which it could be, and was, subject to all kinds of limitations. (It is instructive to compare the sever religious limitations on war in the Christian Middle Ages with the subsequent development of war by nation states in modern times--backed of course by the religious establishment.) Arjuna has an instinctive repugnance for war, and that is the chief reason why war is chosen as the example of the most repellent kind of duty. The Gita is saying that even in what appears to be most "unspiritual" one can act with pure intentions and thus be guided by Krishna consciousness. This consciousness itself will impose the most strict limitations on one's use of violence because that use will not be directed by one's own selfish interests, still less by cruelty, sadism, and blood-lust.

The discoveries of Freud and others in modern times have, of course, alerted us to the fact that there are certain imperatives of culture and of conscience which appear pure on the surface and are in fact bestial in their roots. The greatest inhumanities have been perpetrated in the name of "humanity," "civilization," "progress," "freedom," "my country," and of course "God." This reminds us that in the cultivation of an inner spiritual consciousness there is a perpetual danger of self-deception, narcissism, self-righteous evasion of truth. In other words, the standard temptation of religious and spiritually minded people is to cultivate an inner sense of rightness or of peace, and make this subjective feeling the final test of everything. As long as this feeling of rightness remains with them, they will do anything under the sun. But this inner feeling (as Auschwitz and the Eichmann case have shown) can coexist with the ultimate in human corruption.

The hazard of the spiritual quest is of course that its genuineness cannot be left to our own isolated subjective judgment alone. The fact that I am turned on doesn't prove anything whatever. (Nor does the fact that I am turned off.) We do not simply create our own lives on our own terms. Any attempt to do so is ultimately an affirmation of our individual self as ultimate and supreme. This is a self-idolatry which is diametrically opposed to Krishna consciousness or to any other authentic form of religious or metaphysical consciousness.

The Gita sees that the basic problem of man is his endemic refusal to live by a will other than his own. For in striving to live entirely by his own individual will, instead of becoming free, man is enslaved by forces even more exterior and more delusory than his own transient fancies. He projects himself out of the present into the future. He tries to make for himself a future that accords with his own fantasy, and thereby escape from a present reality which he does not fully accept. And yet, when he moves into the future he wanted to create for himself, it becomes a present that is once again repugnant to him. And yet this is what he had "made" for himself--it is his karma. In accepting the present in all its reality as something to be dealt with precisely as it is, man comes to grips at once with his karma and with a providential will which, ultimately, is more his own than what he currently experiences, on a superficial level, as "his own will." It is in surrendering a false and illusory liberty on the superficial level that man unites himself with the inner ground of reality and freedom in himself which is the will of God, of Krishna, of Providence, of Tao. These concepts do not all exactly coincide, but they have much in common. It is by remaining open to an infinite number of unexpected possibilities which transcend his own imagination and capacity to plan that man really fulfills his own need for freedom. The Gita, like the Gospels, teaches us to live in awareness of an inner truth that exceeds the grasp of our thought and cannot be subject to our own control. In following mere appetite for power we are slaves of appetite. In obedience to that truth we are at last free.

Thomas Merton
From The Asian Journal of Thomas Merton
pp. 348-353

GANDHI

In Gandhi's mind, non-violence was not simply a political tactic which was supremely useful and efficacious in liberating his people from foreign rule, in order that India might then concentrate on realizing its own national identity. On the contrary, the spirit of non-violence sprang from an inner realization of spiritual unity in himself. The whole Gandhian concept of non-violent action and satyagraha is incomprehensible if it is thought to be a means of achieving unity rather than as the fruit of inner unity already achieved.

Indeed this is the explanation for Gandhi's apparent failure (which became evident to him at the end of his own life). He saw that his followers had not reached the inner unity that he had realized in himself, and that their satyagraha was to a great extent a pretense, since they believed it to be a means to achieve unity and freedom, while he saw that it must necessarily be the fruit of inner freedom.

What is most striking in this concept of Gandhi's is its breadth, its integrity, and its unity. This is his lesson and his legacy to the world: The evils we suffer cannot be eliminated by a violent attack in which one sector of humanity flies at another in destructive fury. Our evils are common and the solution of them can only be common. But we are not ready to undertake this common task because we are not ourselves. Consequently the first duty of every man is to return to his own "right mind" in order that society itself may be sane.

It should be quite obvious that satyagraha has nothing in it of Western middle-class banality. It does not mean "honesty is the best policy," because it is far more than honesty and it is infinitely more than a policy. One does not obey the prajnatman, or intellectual principle, the "spirit of truth," simply in order to get something out of one's obedience.

The truth may turn out in terms of the current modds and trends of a blind society to be supremely unprofitable. In that case, when truth becomes absolutely the worst policy, one follows it anyway, even then it leads to death.

In conclusion, Gandhi's "vow of truth" and all the other ashram vows, which were the necessary preamble to the awakening of a mature political consciousness, must be seen for what they are: not simple ascetic or devotional indulgences that may possibly suit the fancy of a few religious pacifists and confused poets, but precepts fundamentally necessary if man is to recover his right mind.

Thomas Merton
From "Gandhi and the One Eyed Giant" Jubilee 12 (January 1965) :14

MOONLIGHT JASMINE AND RICKETS

When one writes about India as a European and in English (as I do), inevitably one writes not for Indian but for Western readers. Problems of communication present themselves: how to translate the idiom of one language into another, how to present a scene to an audience unfamiliar with its most obvious ingredients (such as temples, bazaars, and motorcycle rickshaws).

All these problems, however, very quickly disappear--not because they have been solved but because a much larger one swallows them up: and that is how to explain, within the limits of Western terms and concepts, what it is like to live in India.

How to explain--to begin with--an Indian summer day: when inside the city walls the lanes and alleys are packed with people and the sun draws every kind of smell out of the gutters, while outside plains of dust stretch away into the shimmering distance that may turn out to be the horizon or just a further extension of dust.

Only those who have lived through days of endless Indian heat know their effect on one's behavior.

The Western characters in my novels are amazed at themselves. They yell at servants, abuse shopkeepers, nearly (or not even nearly) strike the clerk in the post office. "My God," they ask, "what's happening to me?"

What's happening to me? My Western characters--who of course include myself--have reason to be appalled at the transformation to which they are being subjected. Along with their behavior, their most cherished principles and feelings seem to be changing.

What, for instance, has happened to their feelings for that suffering humanity they see around them? The same crowds still people the streets (a morality play with a full cast of beggars, cripples and lepers); but the strong reaction this sight aroused on first arrival seems to have evaporated.

And yet, while wondering at their own attitude, my Western characters wonder still more at that of the Indian characters. One of these Western characters may be invited to a wedding--a festive scene where fairy lights twinkle, the tables are loaded with pilaos and kebaos, and the guests with ornaments and brocades; the bandsmen play.

No one seems to notice that the bandsmen have no shoes, that gazing in at the front there is a rabble of children suffering from rickets and eye disease while at the back, where the waste food goes, a rabble of grownups is holding out old tins. Don't Indians <u>see</u>? my Western character asks. Several weddings later it begins to dawn on him that perhaps they do see-they have been doing so much longer than he has, for generations and centuries.

It may be the reason why they eat so frenziedly: because when you have seen for <u>that</u> long, you may be tempted to grab all you can while you can and help yourself with both hands to whatever gifts are, for the moment, miraculously held out to you.

But even if I manage to get this idea across to my readers, that greed and callousness may be a product of the Indian condition, how then to explain to them that the very same condition may also engender an opposite reaction? That Indian spirituality--not grabbing at the world but wanting nothing whatsoever to do with it--is equally explicable within the context of Indian experience?

If you live, or see others live, in what sometimes seems like hell, you may begin to believe in heaven--of which, by the way, India does not leave you without some slight intimations (for instance, in the nights, laden with moonlight and jasmine, that follow the dusty days).

And once there is news of such a superior place, it is only natural no longer to care very much about what happens <u>here</u>. Or what happens <u>now</u>, for one's sense of time also seems to change.

I don't know whether this is the effect of the endless days under the endlessly hot sky; or the sight of rubbled tombs and forts, the last stones of dead cities, so freely scattered over the desert plains: but against such a background one human span of life or time does not loom large.

Besides the problem of conveying to my readers these most basic principles, there is also that of what to do with my Western characters (still including myself) after they have lived through them.

It is as if by being here they have been exposed to another dimension and have begun to open up in response to it. But this is often a painful process and not everyone can stand it, especially not for any length of time.

I used to end my novels with the Western characters in them running back to Europe or America where they could live once more within their own familiar limits. But now this no longer seems a very satisfying or conclusive end to me. I have noticed that these Western characters are often restless at home--that they can't forget the experience and, having once been opened by it, find it difficult to close up again.

Ruth Prawer Jhabvala
New York Times editorial
April 22, 1975

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Life Books. The World's Great Religions. New York: Time Incorporated, 1947. 310 pages.

Through drawings, photographs, and text, the beliefs and practices of Hinduism are covered in concise form, which nonetheless conveys the vastness and complexity of the religion. Of the twenty-nine pages devoted to Hinduism eight are brief excerpts from a wide range of sacred writings, making this a comprehensive introduction to the religion and literature.

Noss, John B. Man's Religions. New York: MacMillan, 1969. 816 pages.

Mr. Noss follows the historical development of early Hinduism, from ritual sacrifice to mystical union, and on to later Hinduism as the basis of social behavior. His references and quotes from classical Hindu literature make his book an especially helpful resource for the beginning student in Hindu religion and literature.

Ross, Nancy W. Three Ways of Asian Wisdom. New York: Simon and Shuster, A Clarion Book, 1966. 222 pages.

The first third of this book traces the culture, fundamental concepts, writings and leaders of Hinduism. Much of this section is devoted to the nineteenth and twentieth century religious personalities, such as Ramakrishna and Gandhi. This attractively illustrated book is a pleasant introduction to Hinduism.

Smart, Ninian. The Religious Experience of Mankind. New York. Charles-Scribner's Sons, 1969. 576 pages.

Illustrated with maps and black and white photographs, this book traces the development of Indian religious experience from ancient to modern times, using examples from the scriptures. The inclusion of Jainism and early Buddhism as part of this historical pattern might prove confusing to the beginning reader in Eastern religions.

Smith, Huston. The Religions of Man. New York: Perennial Library, Harper Row, 1958. 371 pages.

This scholarly but readable book presents a comprehensive discussion of the basic tenets of the religion. Of practical help is Mr. Smith's delineation point by point of information such as the Four Paths to the Goal, the Four Stages of Life, Stations of Life.

Hopkins, Thomas J. The Hindu Religious Tradition. California: Dickenson Publishing Company, 1971. 156 pages.

This book shows the development of the religious concepts, forms of worship, and social institutions of Hinduism historically and chronologically, using a map, charts. Mr. Hopkins has provided not only an excellent introduction to the religion, but also a continuing sourcebook of information and interpretation. His extensive, annotated bibliography is especially helpful.

Ions, Veronica. Indian Mythology. London: Paul Hamlyn Ltd., 1967. 141 pages.

This well-illustrated book provides a general survey of Indian history and theology with very little emphasis on philosophy and metaphysics. The clear explanations and illustrations make it a good starter for the classroom library.

Johnson, Donald and Jean. God and Gods in Hinduism. New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann India. 1972. 88 pages.

This short work explains the nature and concept of God in the Hindu pantheon. It explores the Hindu "oneness of life" and the role played by deities in Hinduism through the ages.

Morgan, Kenneth (ed.). Religion of the Hindus. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1953. 400 pages.

Part I of this two-part book is a unique view of the religious beliefs and practices written by authoritative Hindus in six long essays. Part II is an anthology of selections from the major religious writings, which are not outstanding translations in themselves but are a sample of the sacred works.

O'Malley, L.S.S. Popular Hinduism: The Religion of the Masses. New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970. 246 pages.

In this book O'Malley describes the differences between the beliefs and practices of the cultured classes of Hindu India and those of the masses. He describes ways of worship, ceremonies, various types of holy men and religious leaders, and the peculiar phenomenon of modern deification. The book provides the reader with valuable information concerning Hinduism as it is lived and practiced by the masses.

Organ, Troy Wilson. Hinduism: Its Historical Development. New York: Barren's Educational Series, Inc. 1974. 425 pages.

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Mr. Renou's book consists of a series of brief introductions to major Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain works, divided into four parts: Sanskrit, Middle Indian, Dravidian, and Modern Indo-Aryan Literature. It will be particularly helpful to those interested in the influence of Indian writings in Western and other Eastern literatures.

Sen, K.M. Hinduism. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1967. 160 pages.

This book is divided into three parts: the nature and ideals of Hindu schools of thought, the evolution of Hindu thought and practices, and selections from the Vedas, Upanishads, and Bhagavad Gita. Particularly valuable for the beginning student are the discussions of the Vedic culture, caste system, the six systems of philosophy, and the nature and growth of Hinduism.

Wood, Ernest. Yoga Wisdom. New York: Philosophical Library, 1970. 101 pages.

Mr. Wood gives excellent, detailed explanations of Hindu terms not normally found in glossaries. This is a valuable resource for both the beginning and advanced student.

Zaehner, R. C. Hinduism. London: Oxford University Press, 1962. 210 pages.

A book of scope and depth, this explores the major concepts of Hinduism, the historical development of the religious beliefs, the cultural aspects of the religion and the many theistic trends. With its many references to the sacred literature, Mr. Zaehner's book is invaluable for the reader who wishes to study Hinduism more deeply.

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Liberally illustrated with seventy black and white plates, this book discusses the origin, meaning, and importance of the many motifs, myths, and symbols which appear in Indian sculpture and painting through the ages. The teacher who wishes to explore these symbols and relate them to their appearances in the sacred literature will find this book fascinating.

Other Anthologies

Alphonso-Karkala, John B. An Anthology of Indian Literature. London: Penguin Books, 1971. 630 pages.

This anthology is arranged chronologically by cultural movements with an introduction to each period and extensive representations of the literature. Of interest to both newcomer and expert are the chart comparing the book's selections to similar texts in world literature and a lengthy bibliography, which is divided into a section on Reference Works, History, Criticism and a section of other translations.

Embree, Ainslie T. (ed.) The Hindu Tradition. New York: Random House, Vintage Books, 1972. 363 pages.

This collection of primary sources (from Vedic to modern times) is arranged chronologically with introductions that interpret and explain each selection's place in the Hindu Tradition.

Ghosh, Oroon. The Dance of Shiva and Other Tales from India. New York: New American Library, 1965. 341 pages.

This book, written in popular storytelling form, attempts to relate in vignettes some of the major myths, legends, and concepts of Hinduism and Buddhism. The brevity and simplicity of the selections can serve the needs of only the beginning student.

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The text is divided into five parts: The Revealed Scriptures, The Epics, Auxiliary Scriptures, The Mystic Poets, and The Hindu Renaissance. This excellent anthology is a practical book for the new reader.

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This is a selection of stories that reflect the assumptions, attitudes, and unsophisticated forms of Hindu religion. They are arranged topically so that the reader can follow, in some respects, the life processes by which Hindus come into possession of their own traditions, values, and convictions. The book is divided into three parts: hero stories, religious meditations and teachings, and stories of the gods. The stories are about Shiva and Vishnu and include a brief version of the Ramayana as well as a cycle of the Krishna stories. Commentaries provide an explanation of the central issues raised by the stories.

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This is another book of general coverage with brief selections from ancient to modern times and a thirty-eight page introduction which is more difficult than the textual excerpts. The selections themselves are of general interest, but the introduction is for the more advanced student.

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This excellent translation has samples of the Rig Veda and Atharva Veda, a very strong section from the Upanishads with the thirteen principle ones represented, and Zaehner's own translation of the Bhagavad Gita. The seventeen-page introduction gives the new teacher necessary background to these early Hindu writings.

Literature

Dimock, Edward C., Jr. et. al. The Literatures of India, an Introduction. Chicago. University of Chicago Press, 1975. 265 pages.

Six experts explore the literary history of India by providing information and insights into the many literary forms and languages that have flourished on the subcontinent. In addition to an excellent introduction, there are chapters devoted to the epic, classical drama, poetics, story literature, and the modern short story.

Dimock, Edward C. and Denise Levertov, Trans. In Praise of Krishna. Anchor Books, New York. 1967. 95 pages.

This is a fine collection of Bengali poetry about Krishna and his lover Radha. The poetry is both romantic and passionate and tells of the first awakening of love between Krishna and Radha, through realization, separation, reconciliation and reunion. This text is useful when studying the Gita Govinda.

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This novel should be read in its entirety in order to apprciate fully the blending of national strains in British India. Chapter 33 includes an exquisite description of temple ceremonies celebrating the birth of Krishna.

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Here Arthur W. Ryder has translated for us the works of Kalidasa, the greatest Sanskrit poet. In addition to Shakuntala, this volume contains two minor dramas, two epics, one elegiac poem (The Cloud Messenger), and a descriptive poem (The Seasons). The Introduction provides us with information about Kalidasa's life and works. The Preface describes Indian drama and contrasts it with drama as we know it in the West. Shakuntala is a story of romantic love taken from the Mahabharata. It is rich in its expression of Indian culture, especially Hindu beliefs and customs.

Natwar-Singh, K. (Ed.) Tales from Modern India. New York: Collier Books, 1973. 274 pages.

This is a collection of twenty short stories about India, including stories about caste, the occult, women and marriage. The introduction includes a note about each author and a brief history of Indian literature.

Ramanujan, A. K. Speaking of Siva. Baltimore: Penquin Books, 1973. 199 pages.

This book is a collection of strikingly original vacanes (lyrics in Kamada free verse) written between the tenth and twelfth centuries by four Virasvia saints. The lyrics all speak of Siva and speak to Siva.

van Buitenen, J.A.B. Trans. Tales of Ancient India. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959.

A translation from Sanskrit of a representative sampling of narrative literature from one of the Golden Ages of India. The world in which the tales are set is one which places a premium upon slickness and guile as aids to success. Merchant, aristocrats, Brahmins, thieves, and courtesans mingle with vampires, demi-gods and the hierarchy of heaven in a series of lively or passionate adventures. Many of the stories explore the mystique of commercial exploration. Because the tales emphasize the importance of acquiring wealth and power and advocates a very effective sort of oneupmanship it nicely compliments the tales from the Panchatantra.

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Basham, A. L. The Wonder That Was India. New York: Grove Press, 1959. 572 pages.

This work treats of the history and culture of India from the early civilization of the Indus Valley to the coming of the Muslins, covering all aspects of ancient Indian life and thought both in the Aryan North and the Dravidian South. The chapters devoted to religion and literature are particularly helpful. This comprehensive work is primarily intended for the reader with no background knowledge on the subject.

Johnson, Donald J. and Jean E. (Eds.) Through Indian Eyes, 2 Vols. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974. Vol. 1-156 pages, Vol. 2-136 pages.

The authors present an Indian view of India. The material for these two volumes is taken from a number of sources: autobiographies, fiction, poetry, newspapers, magazine articles, and historical documents. Volume 1 focuses on the personal aspects of Indian life. Volume 2 focuses on national and international affairs. Volume 1 is specially helpful to students of religious literature. It deals with such subjects as Dharma, Karma, Moksha, stages of life, family, women, and marriage.

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This collection of journalistic pieces represents an excellent study of present-day India. In 1965 Mehta returned to his native land for two years of travel and study. His observations and experiences during that time form a portrait that makes India real and comprehensible to the Western reader.

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The author takes the reader on a personal tour of the great river. He explores the land and cities along her banks, with frequent excursions into periods of history that have shaped India's destiny. Excellent photographs and fascinating observations about India and her people make this a valuable book for your resource library.

Wallbank, T. Walter. A Short History of India and Pakistan (an abridged edition of India in the New Era). New York: The New American Library, 1965. 334 pages

Told with a decidedly Western bias, this is the history of India and Pakistan: the people, leaders, culture, economy, government, politics and the religious heritage that made partition a necessity. This will be of interest to the student and teacher who wish to investigate the recent history of the subcontinent.

FILMOGRAPHY

Most of the films listed below can be rented. Following each annotation is the address of the company or rental library where the films can be obtained. The complete address of each film rental library follows this filmography. The Government of India does not charge for the use of its films. Information concerning rental fees are listed wherever possible. Because these prices are subject to change, they must be considered as approximate.

Boy of Bombay. B/W 20 minutes

A boy and his father take a pilgrimage to a Hindu temple. Scenes and experiences along the way show Indian life. Scenes at the temple show religious rites and ceremonies.
BFA Educational Media, 2211 Michigan Avenue, San Monica, CA 90404 Telephone (213) 829-2901.

Evolution of a Yogi with Pam Dass. color 19 minutes

This is the story of one man's remarkable change from hippy to holy man. The experience of Dr. Richard Alpert, former professor of psychology at Harvard explains in a very general way the Hindu method called Raja Yoga and the techniques that help one enter higher states of consciousness.
University of Michigan Rental Fee - $12.00

Gandhi. B/W 27 minutes

This CBS news "20th Century" production traces the Mahatma's rise to importance in India and his struggles in the independence movement, terminating in his assassination in 1948. Mainly composed of newsreel shots, this film superbly records Gandhi's role in the Salt March, the Round Table Conference, and the Independence Day ceremonies.
Syracuse University

Gandhi. B/W 26 minutes

This film was produced by David Wolper as part of an award-winning biography series. It consists of newsreel footage of Gandhi's role in several key moments of modern Indian history including his time in prison and his non-violent defiance of the British.
Syracuse University.

Hindu Rituals. color 7 minutes

This is a study of various Hindu rituals and of the importance of the Ganges River in Hindu life. It includes views of ritual bathing and the formal burning of the dead. (1968)
Doubleday Multi-Media, 1370 Reynolds Avenue, Santa Ana, CA 92705

The Hindu World. B/W 10 minutes

A basic film on yoga, caste, temples and venerated practices in the Hindu world. Brief but basic, the film shows the old and new India.
University of Michigan. Rental Fee - $3.5(

Hinduism. B/W 18 minutes

The beauty and mysticism characteristic of Hindu worship is presented in personal and human terms. Belief in the basic spiritual essence of existence is carefully explained.
Pennsylvania State University. #20193 Rental Fee - $7.00

Hinduism, Part I: Neither this . . . Nor this. B/W 31 minutes

Dr. Huston Smith discusses the desire of the world (pleasures, wealth, fame, and power) and the way in which they are related to Hinduism.
Kent State University #C2158 Rental Fee - $10.00

Hinduism, Part II: The Four Yogas. B/W 31 minutes

Dr. Huston Smith explains the four yogas in relation to union with God. He explains how an individual can use these paths to move closer to union with God.
Kent State University #2159 Rental Fee - $10.00

Hinduism, Part III: The Beyond Within. B/W 31 minutes

Dr. Huston Smith discusses reincarnation as it relates to the ultimate use of the soul of man by God. He explains how the soul moves through several states (depending on how well one has lived in the world of action) towards ultimate union with God.
Kent State University #2160 Rental Fee - $10.00

Image India: The Hindu Way. color 11 films

Dr. H. Daniel Smith, Professor of Comparative Religion at Syracuse University, while he was in India, prepared a series of films on Hindu ways of worship and celebration. The series was filmed in Madras within the Tengalai brahmin community of Srivaisnavas. These films make it possible for students who have never been to India to understand something of the meaning and vitality of contemporary Hindu practices.

Image India: The Hindu Way. (continued)

The individual films are:

1. How a Hindu Worships: At the Home Shrine. 18 minutes
2. Hindu Temple Rites: Bathing the Image of God. 13 minutes
3. Pilgrimage to a Hindu Temple. 14 minutes
4. Hindu Procession to the Sea. 8 minutes
5. The Hindu Sacraments of Childhood: The First Five Years. 25 minutes
6. The Hindu Sacrament of Thread Investiture. 14 minutes
7. Hindu Devotions at Dawn. 10 minutes
8. Hindu Sacrament of Surrender. 8 minutes
9. Hindu Family Celebration: Sixtieth Birthday. 9 minutes
10. Monthly Ancestral Offerings in Hinduism. 8 minutes
11. Radha's Day: Hindu Family Life. 17 minutes

India: Haunting Passage. B/W 60 minutes

This is a three-part film with (1) a sitar recital by Ravi Shankar; (2) an excerpt from the Ramayana performed by Indian puppets and the Bombay Ballet Company, and (3) a drama directed by Satyajit Ray which contrasts the play world of two Indian boys, one rich and one poor. This is a first rate introduction to Indian culture. The Pennsylvania State University. Rental Fee - $12.00

An Indian Day (formerly India '67) color 52 minutes

This is a visual tour of virtually all parts of India. A survey of the variety of life in the subcontinent. Part of the fun is figuring out what is going on in a particular sequence. This is an excellent film with which to end a workshop or a course on India. Government of India.

Khajuraho Eternal. color 11 minutes

This is a study of the cycle of creation and destruction expressed through the use of sculptures from the temples of Khajuraho built 1000 years ago during the Hindu period of India. (1966) Filmasia Productions, 310 W. 53 Street, New York, NY 10019

Meditations: Yoga, Tai Chi and Other Spiritual Trips. color 22 minutes

Narrator visits Marie Paulin at a School of Hatha Yoga and interviews Alan Watts. Theater students demonstrate traditional yoga and Tai Chi forms.
Pennsylvania State University Rental Fee - $14.00

Omega. color 13 minutes

Special effects depict man's liberation from earthly bonds and his rebirth which enables him to perceive a larger world than he had known before.
Pennsylvania State University #21567 Rental Fee - $5.90

Radha and Krishna. color 22 minutes

The film traces the events of Lord Krishna's life including his birth, life in Brindavan with the Gopisand the fulfillment of his divine mission. The legend is depicted in a series of miniature paintings of Pahari artists of the 18th century.
Government of India.

The Religious Experience. color 20 minutes

An exploratory film on the effect of religion on man, moving him sometimes to greatness and other times to cruelty. It shows religion as man's attempt to make sense out of existence and to explain the mystery of life.
McGraw-Hill Text-Films, 1221 Ave. of America, New York, NY 10020

Samadhi. color 6 minutes

This film features brilliantly colored vapors which form a variety of undulating patterns that unify repeatedly into clearly defined spheres corresponding in yoga theory to lights representing earth, air, fire and water.
United World Films, Kinetic Division, 2001 S. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90007

The Sun Also Rises in the East. color 10 minutes

The sounds and colors of India set a mood without use of words. The early morning scenes show the diversity of occupations in India with major emphasis on work in the villages.
McGraw-Hill Text-Films, 1221 Ave. of America, New York, NY 10020

Sun Temple. color 10 minutes

This film employs Indian sculpture to depict the thought and philosophy of India's golden age of Hinduism.
Artscope, Ltd., 310 W. 53rd Street, New York, NY 10019

The Sword and the Flute. color 22 minutes

Through miniature paintings the camera explores life in Maghul India. Its main themes include life in the Maghul court (16th-18th centuries) and the life of an ascetic in search of enlightenment.
Radim Films Inc., 220 West 42nd Street, New York, NY 10036

Feature Films

There are three feature films by Satyajit Ray which have won universal acclaim. They compose a trilogy, each is a classic in its own right and can be shown independently of the others.

Pather Panchali. B/W

This film deals with a family in a Bengal village, their poverty and suffering, the tensions of tradition and the change. Ravi Shankar's sitar music enlivens the sound track.

Aparajito. B/W

Apursansar. (The World of Apu) B/W

These two films carry the story of the same family out of the village into the environs of Calcutta. Here the children have grown. The boy has become a man, then follows love, marriage, and death.

Pather Panchali and Aparajito are available from:

Audio Film Center
34 MacQuesten Parkway So
Mount Vernon, New York 10550

Apursansar is available from:

Brandon Films, Inc.
221 West 75th Street
New York, NY 10019

FILM RENTAL LIBRARY

1. The Consul General of India
   3 East 64th Street
   New York, NY 10021

2. Kent State University
   Audio Visual Services
   Kent, Ohio 44242

3. The University of Michigan
   Audio-Visual Education Center
   416 Fourth Street
   Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103
   Telephone (313) 764-5361

4. Film Rental Library
   Syracuse University
   1455 East Colven Street
   Syracuse, NY 13210

5. The Pennsylvania State University
   Audio-Visual Services
   17 Willard Building
   University Park, PA 16802
   Telephone (814) 865-0291

FILMSTRIPS AND SLIDES

East Meets West: A Contrast In Values and Cultures. Parts I and II. The Center for the Humanities. White Plains, New York. 1972. 75 slides in each part. Carousel, record, cassette, script.

Through superior art and historical narration, the program examines the effects of the encounter between major civilizations of the East and the cultures of the West. Fundamental concepts inherent in Asian cultures are considered along with concepts from Western culture. Vocabulary list, comprehension questions, and discussion topics provide this program with a broad basis in Hindu culture.

Man and His Gods: An Inquiry into the Nature of Religion. Parts I and II. The Center for the Humanities, White Plains, New York. 1972. 80 slides in each part. Carousel, record, cassette, script.

This two part program explores man's relation to his gods and his use of religion through different centuries and cultures. Slides and narration present masterpieces of art and literature, showing the fleeting and unchangeable nature of man. Part I centers around man's attempts to communicate with the divine; Part II concerns man's need for religion and his ability to answer all his questions by himself.

Religions Around the World: Understanding Hinduism. SVE, 1345 Diversey Pkwy., Chicago, Illinois, 80 frames (filmstrip). Record and script.

The story of a young Brahmin boy on pilgrimage to nearby Hindu temples is told and shown in narrative style. One sequence shows father and son paying respects to the gods. Another shows the "Feast of Lights" and ancient Scriptures. Another visualizes a Hindu wedding and a funeral. Basic beliefs about Brahman, the Hindu trinity and the paths to God are explained.

Religions of India: Hinduism. Intelculture Associates, Box 277, Thompson, Conn. filmstrip and cassette, script upon request. 1973.

Authentic scholarship has informed this filmstrip of 56 frames and the narration of 35 minutes which may be used as resource material. The highly informative narration tells basic Hindu beliefs, goals of Hinduism, the relationship between belief and practice, and codes of behavior for Hindus. The filmstrip shows how the religion is practiced and places of pilgrimage.

Two Cultures: Case Studies in Social Values. Scholat Productions, West Nyack, New York. 1972. Parts I, II, III, IV. Filmstrip, cassettes, script.

A conceptual approach is the basis of this series of four filmstrips: the impact of thought on (1) American society and (2) Indian society, and the impact of tradition on (3) American society and (4) Hindu culture. The filmstrips, ranging from 75 to 110 frames each, show how the assumptions of dualism in American and monism in India influence thinking. Pertinent to the study of Hindu literature are emphases on Brahman, dharma, ashrama, varna, samsara, maya, Ram, Vishnu and Bhagavad-Gita.

World's Great Religions, The: Hinduism. Parts I and II. TIME-LIFE Education, New York City. 1973. Filmstrips, record, cassette, script, spirit masters, pamphlets for students.

A simple but useful presentation on chronology, belief, culture, history and and customs of Hinduism. Additional aids which may be ordered for classroom use are the large-size reprints of high interest and easy reading, with an especially colorful center-page foldout of the pantheon of Hindu gods and goddesses.

MAJOR SOURCES OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

The Asia Society
112 East 64th Street
New York, NY 10021
(212) PL1-4210

Educational Resources Center
The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department
D-53 Defense Colony
New Delhi 110 024, India

Information Service of India
3 East 64th Street
New York, 21 NY
(212) TR9-7800

InterCulture Associates, Inc.
Box 277
Thompson, CT 06277
(203) 923-9494

Public Education Religion Studies Center
(PERSC)
Wright State University
Dayton, Ohio 45431

Service Center for Teachers of Asian Studies
Association for Asian Studies
The Ohio State University
29 West Woodruff Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43210

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